

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A CHINESE ANTHOLOGY

Being Three Hundred

Poems of the Tang Dynasty

618-906

Translated
by
WILLER BYNNER

from the texts of
KIANG KANG-HU

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WE JOIN
IN DEDICATING OUR TRANSLATIONS
TO
ALBERT M BENDER

"Literature endures like the universal spirit,
And its breath becomes a part of the vitals of all men

LI SHANG-YIN

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Introduction

I

POETRY AND CULTURE

by Witter Bynner

LIKE MOST of us who have been schooled in this western world I was afforded in my youth a study of culture flowing mainly from two sources the Greek and the Hebrew I had come to feel that poetic literature must contain streams from one or the other of these two sources on the one hand the clean objective symmetrical athletic beauty of the Greek on the other hand the turgid subjective distorted elaborated beauty of the Hebrew Like my fellow students I had been offered nothing of the literatures of the Far East I am still doubtful that I could ever feel any real adherence to the ornate and entranced literature of India but I have come by accident into as close touch with Chinese poetry as a westerner is able to come without a knowledge of the Chinese tongue And I feel with conviction that in the matter of poetry I have begun to receive a new finer and deeper education than ever came to me from the Hebrew or the Greek.

Centuries ago cultivated Chinese had reached the intellectual saturation which has tired the mind of the modern European The Chinese gentleman knew the ancient folk songs compiled by Confucius He knew also all around him a profoundly rich civilization a more poised and particularized sophistication than we

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westerners have yet attained. Through the Asian centuries everyone has written verse. In fact, from early imperial days down to these even worse disordered days of the Republic, the sense of poetry as a natural and solacing part of life has lasted among the Chinese people. Whether or not the individual may form or enjoy his poetry in metrical shape, he is constantly aware of the kinship between the beauty of the world and the beauty of imaginative phrase. On any Chinese mountain-climb toward a temple, rock after rock with its terse and suggestive inscription will bear witness to this temper. So will the street cries of the peddlers, or the names of the tea-houses, and on many hill-tops and lake-sides the casual but reverent jottings of this or that anonymous appreciator of natural beauty. When Whitman said "To have great poets there must be great audiences too," he must have had in the back of his mind enriched generations like the Elizabethan in England or like almost any generation in China. In those great audiences each man, to the limit of his capacity and with natural ease, was a poet.

There is a simple secret in these generations. It is told in a pamphlet by a venerable Chinese scholar who, until his death two years ago, was still with infinite passion adhering to the precepts of his ancestors, and with infinite patience, acceptably expressed by the way among foreigners, adhering to his conviction that foreigners impair the health of China. His name is Ku Hung-ming. His pamphlet, written in English, one of the five languages which he could use, is called *The Spirit of the Chinese People*. In it he advances, as reason for the eternal youth of the Chinese people, the fact that the average Chinese has managed to maintain within himself the head of a man and the heart of a child. On this

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brief he is absorbingly interesting explaining the continuance of Chinese culture the only ancient culture still racially existent My immediate concern with his brief is more special I detect in it something that he does not specify a reason for the continuance of poetry as a live factor among his people and more than that the best reason I know of for the persistence of poetry anywhere among cultured races

Music may be the most intimate of the arts I am not sure Except for simple melodies music is beyond the reach of any individual who is not a technician Painting and sculpture are obviously arts expressing themselves in single given objects which although they may be copied and so circulated are for the most part accessible only to the privileged or to those who make pilgrimages Poetry more than any other of the arts may be carried about by a man either in his own remembering heart or else in compact and easily available printed form It belongs to anyone It is of all the arts the closest to a man and it will so continue to be in spite of the apparent shocks given it by the noises of modern commerce and science and jazz

It has been a common occurrence in China that poets even the best of them devote their earlier years to some form of public service Century after century Chinese poems reflect this deep devotion of their authors to the good of the State—their unwavering allegiance to righteousness even when it meant demotion or exile or death In modern western times there have been periods when poetry has seemed to be a candle lit and then blooded occupation I venture to surmise that poetry written in that sort of atmosphere grows with time less and less valid less and less noticed As a matter of fact the outstanding English poets have

been acutely concerned with the happiness of their fellow men and have given themselves warmly to public causes in which they believed. Similarly, present-day poets in America, with amazingly few exceptions, have clustered to the defence of noble souls at bay like Eugene Debs, or have been quick to protest against doubtful justice, as in the case of Sacco and Vanzetti. This sort of zeal may not result in poetry of a high order immediately connected with the specific cause, but there is no question that but for this bravery, this heat on behalf of man's better nature, there would not be in the hearts of the poets so fine a crucible for their more personal alchemies.

Let me say a more general word than Dr Kiang's as to the characteristic method of the best Chinese poetry. I am not referring to the technical means by which a Chinese poet makes his words balanced and melodious. The discovery which has largely undone my previous convictions as to the way of writing poetry has rather to do with use of substance than with turns of expression. Mencius said long ago, in reference to the Odes collected by Confucius: "Those who explain the Odes must not insist on one term so as to do violence to a sentence, nor on a sentence so as to do violence to the general scope. They must try with their thoughts to meet that scope, and then they will apprehend it." In the poetry of the west we are accustomed to let our appreciative minds accept with joy this or that passage in a poem — to prefer the occasional glitter of a jewel to the straight light of the sun. The Chinese poet seldom lets any portion of what he is saying unbalance the entirety. Moreover, with the exception of a particular class of writing — adulatory verse written for the court — Chinese poetry rarely trespasses beyond the bounds of actuality. Whereas western poets will take

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actualities as points of departure for exaggeration or fantasy or else as shadows of contrast against dreams of unreality the great Chinese poets accept the world exactly as they find it in all its terms and with profound simplicity find therein sufficient solace Even in phraseology they seldom talk about one thing in terms of another but are able enough and sure enough as artists to make the ultimately exact terms become the beautiful terms If a metaphor is used it is a metaphor directly relating to the theme not something borrowed from the ends of the earth The metaphor must be concurrent with the action or flow of the poem not merely superinduced but an integral part of both the scene and the emotion

Wordsworth of our poets comes closest to the Chinese but their poetry cleaves even nearer to nature than his They perform the miracle of identifying the wonder of beauty with common sense Rather they prove that the simplest common sense the most salutary and the most nearly universal is the sense of the beauty of nature quickened and yet sobered by the wistful warmth of human friendship

For our taste used as we are to the operative in poetry the substance of Chinese poems seems often mild or even trivial but if we will be honest with ourselves and with our appreciation of what is lastingly important we shall find these very same poems to be momentous details in the immense patience of beauty They are the heart of an intimate letter They bring the true the beautiful the everlasting into simple easy touch with the human the homely and the immediate And I predict that future western poets will go to school with the masters of the Tang Dynasty as well as with the masters of the golden age of Greece or with the

Hebrew prophets, or with the English dramatists or romanticists—to learn how best may be expressed, for themselves and others, that passionate patience which is the core of life

It is not necessary that culture bring about the death of poetry, as it did in the Rome of Virgil. The cynics are wrong who see in our future no place for an art which belongs, they say, to the childhood of the race. The head of a man and the heart of a child working together as in the Chinese have made possible with one race and may make possible with any race, even in the thick of the most intricate culture, the continuance of the purest poetry

Because of the absence of tenses, of personal pronouns and of connectives generally, the translator of Chinese poetry, like the Chinese reader himself, has considerable leeway as to interpretation. If even in English, so much more definite a language, there may be varying interpretations of a given poem, it is no wonder that critics and annotators have differed as to the meaning of poems in Chinese. There have been frequent instances in this volume where Dr. Kiang and I have discussed several possible meanings of a poem and have chosen for translation into the more definite language the meaning we preferred.

With his sanction I have decided that for readers in English it is better to eliminate or use only seldom the names of places and persons not highly important to the sense of a poem—to use “southern” or “eastern,” for instance, instead of regional names unfamiliar in the Occident, to indicate the person meant when the poem, according to Chinese custom, employs the name and attributes of some other similar well-known person, and to embody in the English text something of the significance which would be

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conveyed to any Chinese reader but not to western readers by historical or literary allusions

At the risk of criticism I have made certain reasonable compromises I have used the sometimes inaccurate term Tartar instead of Hun or barbarian the term China instead of

Han the term Turkestan when it roughly corresponded to the ancient term There are many other approximations which have seemed advisable Once in a while for good reason I have changed a title And there are occasional unimportant omissions I have omitted for instance the ninth born or eleventh born frequently added in the original to names of persons and meaning the ninth or eleventh child in a family Whenever possible I have avoided phrasology which natural and familiar in Chinese would be exotic or quaint in English I have hoped rather to accent in these Tang masterpieces the human and universal qualities by which they have endured

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II

CHINESE POETRY

by Kiang Kang hu

Poems of the Early Period

CHINESE POETRY began with our written history about 5500 years ago. The oldest poems now extant were written by the Emperor Yao (2357 B.C.) and one of them was adopted as the Chinese national song in the beginning of the Republic because Yao was in reality a life president of the most ancient republic in the world and this poem expresses the republican spirit. Shun and Yu, the other two sagacious presidents, left with us also some poems. Their works together with other verses by following emperors and statesmen may be found in our classics and official histories.

In the Chou Dynasty (1122-256 B.C.) poetry became more important not only to individual and social life but also to the government. Emperors used to travel over all the feudal states and to collect the most popular and typical poems or songs. The collection being then examined by the official historians and musicians, public opinion and the welfare of the people in the respective states would thus be ascertained and attested. In the ceremonies of sacrifice, inter-state convention, official banquet and school and military exercises, various poems were sung and

harmonized with music Poetry in this period was not a special literary task for scholars, but a means of expression common to both sexes of all classes

The Classical Poems

One of the five Confucian classics is the *Book of Poetry* It is a selection of poems of the Chou Dynasty, classified under different types This selection was made by Confucius out of the governmental collections of many states It contains three hundred and eleven poems, all of high standard, both as literature and as music Since the loss of the Confucian *Book of Music* during the period of the Great Destruction (221-211 B C) the musical significance of this classic can hardly be traced, but its literary value remains and the distinction of the classical poems, which can never be duplicated

Poems Since the Han Dynasty

The classical poems were usually composed of lines of four characters, or words, with every other line rhymed Lines were allowed, however, of more or fewer words Under the reign of the Emperor Wu (140-87 B C) of the Western Han Dynasty new types of poetry were introduced, and the five-character and seven-character poems became popular and have dominated ever since The Emperor himself invented the latter, while Li Ling and Su Wu, two of his statesmen-generals, wrote their verses in the former type The number of characters of each line was uniform, no irregular line might occur These two types were afterwards named the "ancient" or "unruled" poems Nearly all poems before the T'ang Dynasty were in this form The Emperor Wu introduced

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also the Po Liang style which is a seven character poem with every line rhyming in the last word Po Liang was the name of a pavilion in the Emperor's garden where while he banqueted his literary attendants each wrote one line to complete a long poem This has been a favourite game among Chinese poets

The Poems of the Tang Dynasty

As many a dynasty in Chinese history is marked by some phase of success representing the thought and life of that period the Tang Dynasty is commonly recognized as the golden age of poetry Beginning with the founder of the dynasty down to the last ruler almost every one of the emperors was a great lover and patron of poetry and many were poets themselves A special tribute should be paid to the Empress Wu Chao or the Woman Emperor (684-704) through whose influence poetry became a requisite in examinations for degrees and an important course leading to official promotion This made every official as well as every scholar a poet The poems required in the examination after long years of gradual development followed a formula and many regulations were established Not only must the length of a line be limited to a certain number of characters usually five or seven but also the length of a poem was limited to a certain number of lines usually four or eight or twelve The maintenance of rhymes the parallelism of characters and the balance of tones were other rules considered essential This is called the modern or ruled poetry In the Ching or Manchu Dynasty the examination poem was standardized as a five-character line poem of sixteen lines with every other line rhymed This eight rhyme poem was accompanied by the famous eight legged literature (a form of

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literature divided into eight sections) as a guiding light for entrance into mandarin life

The above-mentioned rules of poetry applied first only to examination poems. But afterwards they became a common exercise with "modern" or "ruled" poems in general Chinese poetry since the T'ang Dynasty has followed practically only two forms, the "modern" or "ruled" form and the "ancient" or "unruled" form. A poet usually writes both. The "eight-rhyme" poem, however, was practised for official examinations only.

The progress of T'ang poetry may be viewed through a division into four periods, as distinguished by different styles and a differing spirit. There were, of course, exceptional works, especially at the transient points, and it is difficult to draw an exact boundary-line between any two periods. The first period is approximately from A.D. 620 to 700, the second from 700 to 780, the third from 780 to 850, and the fourth from 850 to 900. The second period, corresponding to the summer season of the year, is regarded as the most celebrated epoch. Its representative figures are Li Po (705-762), the genie of poetry, Tu Fu, (712-720), the sage of poetry, Wang Wên (699-759) and Mêng Hao-jan (689-740), the two hermit-poets, and Ts'ên Ts'an (given degree, 744) and Wên Ying-wu (about 740-830), the two magistrate-poets. The first period is represented by Chang Yüeh (667-730) and Chang Chiu-ling (673-740), two premiers, and by Sung Chih-wên (died 710) and Tu Shên-yen (between the seventh and the eighth centuries), the third, by Yuan Chên (779-832) and Po Chu-yi (772-846), two cabinet ministers, and by Han Yu (768-824) and Liu Tsung-yuan (773-819), two master *literati* more famous for their prose writing than for their verse, and the fourth, by Wên T'ing-yun

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(ninth century) and Li Shang yin (813-858) the founders of the Hsi K'un school and by Hsu Hun (given degree 83-) and Yao He (A.D. 9th century) All these poets had their works published in a considerable number of volumes. Secondary poets in the Tang Dynasty were legion.

Poems after the Tang Dynasty

Since the Tang Dynasty poetry has become even more popular its requirement as one of the subjects in the governmental examinations has continued for a thousand years to the end of the last century through all changes of dynasty. Many great poets have arisen during this time. Su Shih (1036-1101) Huang T'ing-chien (1050-1110) Ou yang Hsiu (1007-1072) and Lu Yu (1125-1209) of the Sung Dynasty are names as celebrated as those great names of the second period of the Tang Dynasty. But people still honour the works of the Tang poets as the model for ever-coming generations though many of more varied literary taste prefer the Sung works.

Chao Meng fu (1254-1322) of the Yuan Dynasty and Yuan Hao-wen (1190-1258) of the K'in Dynasty were the shining stars of that dark age. Many poets of the Ming Dynasty such as Liu Chi (1311-1375) Sung Lien (1310-1381) Li Tung yang (1447-1516) and Ho Ching ming (1483-1521) were very famous. Still greater poets lived in the Ch'ing Dynasty. Ch'ien Ch'ien yi (1581-1664) Wu Wei yeh (1609-1671) Wang Shih-cheng (1526-1593) Chao Yi (1727-1814) Chiang Shih-chuan (1725-1784) Yuan Mei (1715-1797) Huang Ching jen (1749-1783) and Chang Wen tao (1764-1814) are some of the immortals. Their works are by no means inferior to those in the previous dynasties.

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Literature differs from science. It changes according to times and conditions, but shows, on the whole, neither rapid improvement nor gradual betterment. Later writings might appear to be more expressive and therefore more inspiring, but the dignity and beauty of ancient works are inextinguishable and even unapproached. This is especially true of poetry and of the T'ang poems, for the reason that during those three hundred years the thinking capacity and the working energy of all excellent citizens in the Empire were encouraged and induced to this single subject. Neither before nor after has there been such an age for poetry.

Selections of the T'ang Poems

Hundreds of collections and selections of T'ang poems have been published during the succeeding dynasties. Two compiled in the Ch'ing Dynasty are considered the best. One is the *Complete Collection of T'ang Poems* and the other is the *Three Hundred T'ang Poems*. These two have no similarity in nature and in purpose. The first is an imperial edition aiming to include every line of existing T'ang poetry which amounts to 48,900 poems by 2,200 poets in 900 volumes. The second is but a small text-book for elementary students, giving only 311 better-known works by 77 of the better-known writers, the same number of poems as in the Confucian Classic of Poetry. This selection was made by an anonymous editor who signed himself "Hêng T'ang T'uêi Shih" or "A Retired Scholar at the Lotus Pool," first published in the reign of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung (1735-1795). The title of this selection was based upon a common saying: "By reading thoroughly three hundred T'ang poems, one will write verse without learning."

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In the preface the compiler assures us that this is but a family reader for children but it will hold good until our hair is white. This statement as years have passed has proved true. The collection has always stood in China as the *most popular volume of poetry*, for poets and for the mass of the people alike. Even illiterates are familiar with the title of the book and with lines from it. Other selections may be of a higher standard and please scholars better but none can compare with this in extensive circulation and accessible influence.

The anthology in Chinese is in two volumes. The first contains all ancient or unruled poems and the second all modern or ruled poems. The former is again divided into two parts of five-character lines and seven-character lines the latter into four parts (1) eight five-character lines (2) eight seven-character lines (3) four five-character lines and (4) four seven-character lines. In learning Chinese poems the order is always reversed. The shorter line of fewer characters should come first. We have however rearranged the volume in English according to poets rather than to poetic technique the poets following one another in the alphabetical order of their surnames (The surname in Chinese comes first.) Under each poet we have kept the following order of poems

- 1 Modern poems of four five-character lines
- 2 Modern poems of four seven-character lines
- 3 Modern poems of eight five-character lines
- 4 Modern poems of eight seven-character lines
- 5 Ancient poems of five-character lines
- 6 Ancient poems of seven-character lines

Various Poetic Regulations and Forms

There are more strict regulations in writing poems in Chinese than in any other language. This is because Chinese is the only living language governed by the following rules. First, it is made of individual hieroglyphic characters, second, each character or word is monosyllabic, and third, each character has its fixed tone. Hence certain very important regulations in Chinese poetry are little considered or even unknown to the poetry of other languages. For instance, the avoidance of using a word twice, the parallelism of words of the same nature and the balancing of words of different tones, all need special preliminary explanation.

The first of these regulations is possible only in Chinese poetry. We find many long poems with hundreds or even thousands of characters, and not a single one repeated, as in the form of *p'ai-lu* or "arranged rule." The second means that all the characters of one line should parallel as parts of speech those of the next line, thus noun with noun, adjective with adjective, verb with verb, etc. Even in the same parts of speech, nouns designating animals should be parallel, adjectives of colour, numbers, etc. The third means that all the characters of a line should balance, in the opposite group of tones, those of the next line. There are five tones in the Chinese written language. The first is called the upper even tone, the second, the lower even tone, the third, the upper tone, the fourth, the departing tone, and the fifth, the entering tone. The first two are in one group, named "even tones," and the last three are in the other group and named "uneven tones." Thus, if any character in a line is of the even group, the character which balances with it in the next line should be of the uneven group, and vice versa.

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These strict regulations though very important to modern or ruled poems do not apply to ancient or unruled poems. The ancient form is very liberal. There are but two regulations for it—namely a limit to the number of characters in each line five or seven and rhyme on the last character of every other line. The seven-character ancient poem gives even more leeway. It may have irregular lines of more or fewer characters and every line may rhyme as in the Po Liang style.

There are also as in English perfect rhymes and allowable rhymes. The perfect rhymes are standardized by an Imperial Rhyming Dictionary. In this dictionary all characters are arranged first according to the five tones and then to different rhymes. The two even tones have 30 rhymes, the third 29, the fourth 30, and the fifth a very short sound only 17. These rhymes are so grouped following the old classical pronunciation that some rhyming words may seem to the modern ear discordant. The allowable rhymes include words that rhymed before the standard was made. The modern poem must observe perfect rhymes, the ancient poem is permitted allowable rhymes. Again the former should use only one rhyme of the even tones, the latter may use many different rhymes of different tones in one poem.

The modern poem has also its fixed pattern of tones. There are four patterns for the five-character poems and four for the seven-character poems. The signs used in the following charts are commonly adopted in Chinese poetry.— indicates an even tone, | indicates an uneven tone, T indicates that the character should be of an even tone but that an uneven is permitted, ⊥ indicates the reverse, ⊕ indicates the rhyme.

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TONE PATTERNS FOR FIVE-CHARACTER MODERN POEMS

A

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
	-		-		-		-
-			-	-			-
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	

B

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥
-			-	-			-
	-		-		-		-
	-	-			-	-	
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	

C

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
	-		-		-		
-			-	-			-
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	⊖

D

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥	⊥
-			-	-			-
	-		-		-		
	-	-			-	-	
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	⊖

First line	}	First pair	}	First group
Second line				
Third line	}	Second pair		
Fourth line				
Fifth line	}	Third pair	}	Second group
Sixth line				
Seventh line	}	Fourth pair		
Eighth line				

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TONE PATTERNS FOR SEVEN CHARACTER MODERN POEMS

A

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T
~			-	-			-
	-		-		-		-
	-	-			-	~	
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	

B

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T
~			-	~			-
⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
	-		~		-		-
-			-	-			-
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	

C

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T
~			-	-			-
	-		-		-		
	-	-			-	-	
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	⊖

D

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T
-			-	~			-
⊥	T	T	⊥	⊥	T	T	⊥
	-	-			-	-	
	-		-		-		
-			-	-			-
⊖		⊖		⊖		⊖	⊖

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For further and clearer explanation I use as an example the following poem

Sur-name	杜 Tu ⁴	Cabinet	閣 Ké ⁵
given name	甫 Fu ³	night	夜 yeh ⁴
(Author)		(Title)	

Heaven's	大 T'ien ¹	year	歲 Suéi ⁴
		late	暮 mu ⁴
limit	涯 ya ²	(the)	
		negative force	陰 yin ¹
frost	霜 shuang ¹	(and)	
(and)		positive force	陽 yang ²
snow	雪 hsueh ⁵	urge	催 ts'uêi ¹
brighten	霽 chi ⁴	(the)	
(the)		short	短 tuan ³
cold	寒 han ²	day-	
night	宵 hsiao ¹	light	景 ching ³

(Upon the)	三 San ¹	(At the)	五 wu ⁵
three		fifth	
mountains	峽 hsia ⁵	watch	更 kêng ¹
(the)		(the)	
stars	星 hsing ¹	drum	鼓 ku ³
(and)		(and)	

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milk	何 he ²	bugle s	角 chueh ⁵
way s		sound	聲 sheng ¹
shadows	影 ying ³	sad	悲 pei ¹
move	動 tung ⁴	(and)	壯 chuang ⁴
(and)		brave	
wave	搖 yao ²		
Barbarian	夷 i ²	Wild	野 yeh ³
songs	歌 ke ¹	sobs	哭 k u ⁵
every	是 shih ⁴	(of)	幾 chi ³
place	處 ch u ⁴	many	家 chia ¹
arise		homes	
(from)	起 ch i ³	(are)	聞 wen ²
fishers		heard	
(and)	漁 yu ²	(in)	
wood		fighting	戰 chan ⁴
cutters	樵 chiao	(and)	伐 fa ⁵
		attacking	
Human	人 Jen ²	(The)	臥 Wo ⁴
affairs	事 shih ⁴	Lying	龍 lung
(in)		Dragon	
messages	音 yin ¹	(and)	躍 yueh ⁵
(and)		(the)	
letters	書 shu ¹	Jumping	馬 ma ³
(may)		Horse	
let it be	漫 man ⁴	finally	終 chung ¹
silent		(became)	
(and)	寂 chi ⁵	yellow	黃 huang
solitude	寥 liao ²	dusts	土 tu ³

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The first group of a "ruled poem" is named the "rising pair", the second, the "receiving pair", the third, the "turning pair", and the fourth, the "concluding pair"

This example shows us that in writing a "modern" or "ruled" poem many essential regulations are involved. They may be summed up in six rules

- 1 Limitation of lines (four or eight, though the *p'ai lu* or "arranged rule" poem may have as many lines as the writer likes)
- 2 Limitation of characters in each line (five or seven).
- 3 Observation of the tone pattern (the five-character four-line poems in old times did not observe this rule strictly).
- 4 Parallelism of the nature of words in each couplet (though the first and the last couplets may be exempted)
- 5 Selection of a single rhyme from the even tones and rhyming the last characters of alternate lines (the second, the fourth, the sixth, and the eighth lines, sometimes the first line also). The five-character four-line poems in the old days, however, were allowed rhymes from the uneven tones
- 6 Avoidance of using a character twice unless deliberately repeated for effect

Thus we see the great difficulty in writing a "modern" poem. But poets have always believed that the "modern" poem, though difficult to learn, is easy to write, while the "ancient" poem, though easy to learn, is very difficult to write well. Besides, the "modern" poem is constructed in a very convenient length. It enables the poet to finish his whole work while his thought is still fresh and inspiring, and, if necessary, he can express it in a series,

INTRODUCTION

either connected or separated. We find ever since the Tang Dynasty most of the poets writing most of their poems in the modern forms.

Chinese Poetry in General

All the above statements treat only poems which are in Chinese called *shih*. This word is too narrow to correspond to the English word poetry which is more like the Chinese word *yun wen* or rhythmic literature and yet *yun wen* has a broader content for it includes also drama. There are however many other kinds of *yun wen* besides *shih* not only drama but poetry in general. I will give a brief explanation of each, my idea being that the works we present in this volume though the most common type of Chinese poetry are but one of many types.

In the later part of the Chou Dynasty two new types of poetry were originated: one is the *ch'u ts'u* by Chu Yuan (fourth century B.C.) and the other *fu* by Hsun Kuang (fourth century B.C.). They are both though rhymed called rhythmic prose and have been much practised ever since. The latter is more popular and used to be a subject in the official examinations. Since the Han Dynasty the *yueh fu* or poem written for music has been introduced into literature. We have a few examples in this volume in different forms. Because we do not sing them with their old music which has vanished they have practically lost their original quality though still distinguished by title and style.

Another type of poetry named *ts'u* was formulated in the second period of the Tang Dynasty but was not commonly practised until the last or fourth period. The Sung Dynasty is the golden age of the *ts'u* poems and Li Ch'ing-chao and Chu Shu-cheng two

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

woman poets, are the most famous specialists. This form is composed of lines irregular, but according to fixed patterns. There are hundreds of patterns, each regulated as to the number of characters, group of tones, etc. In the same dynasty the *ch'u*, or dramatic song, the *t'an-ts'ü*, or string song, and the *ku-shu*, or drum tale, were also brought into existence. The next dynasty, the Yuan or Mongol Dynasty, is known as the golden age of these forms of literature. Professional story-tellers or readers are found everywhere singing them with string instruments or drums. Besides these, the *ch'uan-ch'i*, or classical play, the *chiao-pên*, or common play, and the *hsiao-tiao*, or folk-song, are all very popular.

There are numberless Chinese poems written in the revolving order, to be read back and forth. The most amazing poems in human history are the *Huêi-wên-t'u* or the revolving chart, by Lady Su Huêi, of the Chin Dynasty (265-419), and the *Ch'ien-tzû-wên*, or thousand-character literature, by Chou Hsing-ssü, (fifth century A.D.) The former is composed of eight hundred characters, originally woven in five colors on a piece of silk, being a love-poem written and sent to her husband, General Tou T'ao, who was then guarding the northern boundary against the Tartar invasion. The characters can be read from different ends in different directions and so form numerous poems. Four hundred have already been found, some short and some very long. It is believed that there are still more undiscovered. The latter, made of a thousand different characters, was a collection of stone inscriptions left by the master calligrapher, Wang Hsi-chih. They had been but loose characters in no order and with no connexion, but were arranged and rhymed as a perfect poem by Chou Hsing-ssü. The same thousand characters have been made into poems by ten or

INTRODUCTION

more authors and these marvels in the poetical world can never be dreamed of by people who speak language other than Chinese!

All these various forms under various names are not *shih* in the Chinese sense but are poetry in the English sense. Each of them possesses its own footing in the common ground of Chinese poetry. To make any remarks on Chinese poetry at large or to draw any conclusions from it one must take into consideration not only the *shih* but all the various forms. I sometimes hear for eigners as well as young Chinese students blaming Chinese poems as being too stiff or confined. They do not realize that some forms of Chinese poetry are even freer than English free verse. They also criticize the Chinese for having no long poems as other races have ignoring the fact that many *fu* poems are thousands of lines long with tens of thousands of characters and that many rhythmic historical tales fill ten or more volumes each volume following a single rhyme.

KIANG KANG HU

Peking China

THREE HUNDRED POEMS OF THE
TANG DYNASTY
618-906

Anonymous

氏名無

THE DAY OF NO FIRE

As the holiday approaches and grasses are bright after rain
And the causeway gleams with willows and wheatfields wave in
the wind

We are thinking of our kinsfolk far away from us
O cuckoo why do you follow us why do you call us home?

(1 1a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chang Chi

繼 張

A NIGHT-MOORING NEAR MAPLE BRIDGE

While I watch the moon go down, a crow caws through the frost,
Under the shadows of maple-trees a fisherman moves with his
torch,
And I hear, from beyond Su-chou, from the temple on Cold
Mountain,
Ringing for me, here in my boat, the midnight bell

CHANG CHI

Chang Chi

籍 張

THINKING OF A FRIEND
LOST IN THE TIBETAN WAR

Last year you went with your troops to Tibet
And when your men had vanished beyond the city wall
News was cut off between the two worlds
As between the living and the dead
No one has come upon a faithful horse guarding
A crumpled tent or torn flag or any trace of you
If only I knew I might serve you in the temple
Instead of these tears toward the far sky

•

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chang Ch'iao

常 張

ON THE BORDER

Though a bugle breaks the crystal air of autumn,
Soldiers, in the look-out, watch at ease today
The spring wind blowing across green graves
And the pale sun setting beyond Liang-chou
For now, on grey plains done with war,
The border is open to travel again,
And Tartars can no more choose than rivers
They are running, all of them, toward the south

CH ANG CHIEN

Chang Chien

建 常

A BUDDHIST RETREAT
BEHIND BROKEN MOUNTAIN TEMPLE

In the pure morning near the old temple
Where early sunlight points the tree tops
My path has wound through a sheltered hollow
Of boughs and flowers to a Buddhist retreat
Here birds are alive with mountain light
And the mind of man touches peace in a pool
And a thousand sounds are quieted
By the breathing of a temple bell

AT WANG CH ANG LING S RETREAT

Here beside a clear deep lake
You live accompanied by clouds
Or soft through the pine the moon arrives
To be your own pure hearted friend
You rest under thatch in the shadow of your flowers
Your dewy herbs flourish in their bed of moss
Let me leave the world Let me alight like you
On your western mountain with phoenixes and cranes

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chang Chiu-ling

齡九張

LOOKING AT THE MOON
AND THINKING OF ONE FAR AWAY

The moon, grown full now over the sea,
Brightening the whole of heaven,
Brings to separated hearts
The long thoughtfulness of night .
It is no darker though I blow out my candle
It is no warmer though I put on my coat
So I leave my message with the moon
And turn to my bed, hoping for dreams

ORCHID AND ORANGE
(*A Plea for Official Preference*)

I

Tender orchid-leaves in spring
And cinnamon-blossoms bright in autumn
Are as self-contained as life is,
Which conforms them to the seasons

CHANG CHIU LING

Yet why will you think that a forest hermit
 Allured by sweet winds and contented with beauty
 Would no more ask to be transplanted
 Than would any other natural flower?

II

Here south of the Yang tsze grows a red orange tree
 All winter long its leaves are green
 Not because of a warmer soil
 But because its nature is used to the cold
 Though it might serve your honourable guests
 You leave it here far below mountain and river
 Circumstance governs destiny
 Cause and effect are an infinite cycle
 You plant your peach trees and your plums
 You forget the shade from this other tree

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chang Hsu

旭 張

PEACH-BLOSSOM RIVER

A bridge flies away through a wild mist,
Yet here are the rocks and the fisherman's boat.
Oh, if only this river of floating peach-petals
Might lead me at last to the mythical cave!

(2)

CHANG HU

Chang Hu

張 祐

SHE SINGS AN OLD SONG

A lady of the palace these twenty years
She has lived here a thousand miles from her home—
Yet ask her for this song and with the first few words of it
See how she tries to hold back her tears

(3)

ON THE TERRACE OF ASSEMBLED ANGELS

I

The sun has gone slanting over a lordly roof
And red blossoming branches have leaned toward the dew
Since the Emperor last night summoned a new favourite
And Lady Yang's bright smile came through the curtains

II

The Emperor has sent for Lady Kuo Kuo
In the morning riding toward the palace gate
Disdainful of the paint that might have marred her beauty
To meet him she smooths her two moth tiny eyebrows

(4)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

OF ONE IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY

When the moonlight, reaching a tree by the gate,
Shows her a quiet bird on its nest,
She removes her jade hairpins and sits in the shadow
And puts out a flame where a moth was flying.

AT NAN-KING FERRY

This one-story inn at Nan-king ferry
Is a miserable lodging-place for the night —
But across the dead moon's ebbing tide,
Lights from Kua-chou beckon on the river.

CHANG PI

Chang Pi

張 必

A MESSAGE

I go in a dream to the house of Hsieh —
Through a zigzag porch with arching rails
To a court where the spring moon lights for ever
Phantom flowers and a single figure

•

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ch'ên T'ao

鄭 畋

TURKESTAN

Thinking only of their vow that they would crush the Tartars—
On the desert, clad in sable and silk, five thousand of them fell. .
But arisen from their crumbling bones on the banks of the river
at the border,
Dreams of them enter, like men alive, into rooms where their
loves lie sleeping

CH EN TZŨ ANG

Ch en Tzu-ang

昂子陳

ON A GATE TOWER AT YU CHOU

Where before me are the ages that have gone?
And where behind me are the coming generations?
I think of heaven and earth without limit without end,
And I am all alone and my tears fall down

•

Chéng T'ien

陶 陳

ON MA-WÍI SLOPF

When the Emperor came back from his ride, they had murdered
Lady Yang—
That passion unforgettable through all the suns and moons
They had led him to forsake her by reminding him
Of an emperor slain with his lady once, in a well at Ching-yang
Palace

(4, 4a)

CHIA TAO

Chia Tao

卅 卅

A NOTE LEFT FOR AN ABSENT RECLUSE

When I questioned your pupil under a pine tree
My teacher, he answered went for herbs
But toward which corner of the mountain
How can I tell through all these clouds?

•

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ch'ien Ch'i

起 錢

FAREWELL TO A JAPANESE BUDDHIST PRIEST
BOUND HOMEWARD

You were foreordained to find the source
Now, tracing your way as in a dream
There where the sea floats up the sky,
You wane from the world in your fragile boat . . .
The water and the moon are as calm as your faith,
Fishes and dragons follow your chanting,
And the eye still watches beyond the horizon
The holy light of your single lantern.

(5, 5a)

FROM MY STUDY AT THE MOUTH
OF THE VALLEY

A MESSAGE TO CENSOR YANG

At a little grass-hut in the valley of the river,
Where a cloud seems born from a viney wall,
You will love the bamboos new with rain,
And mountains tender in the sunset

CH IEN CH I

Cranes drift early here to rest
And autumn flowers are slow to fade
I have bidden my pupil to sweep the grassy path
For the coming of my friend

TO MY FRIEND AT THE CAPITAL
SECRETARY PAI

Finches flash yellow through the Imperial Grove
Of the Forbidden City pale with spring dawn
Flowers muffle a bell in the Palace of Bliss
And rain has deepened the Dragon Lake willows
But spring is no help to a man bewildered
Who would be like a cloud upholding the Light of Heaven
Yet whose poems ten years refused are shaming
These white hairs held by the petalled pin

(6 7)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chin Ch'ang-hsu

緒昌金

A SPRING SIGH

Drive the orioles away,
All their music from the trees .
When she dreamed that she went to Liao-hsi Camp
To join him there, they awakened her

CH'IN TAO YU

Ch in T ao yu

玉韜秦

A POOR GIRL

Living under a thatch roof never wearing fragrant silk
She longs to arrange a marriage but how could she dare?
Who would know her simple face the loveliest of them all
When we choose for worldliness not for worth?
Her fingers embroider beyond compare
But she cannot vie with painted brows
And year after year she has sewn gold thread
On bridal robes for other girls

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ch'u Wéi

爲 邱

AFTER MISSING THE RECLUSE
ON THE WESTERN MOUNTAIN

To your hermitage here on the top of the mountain
I have climbed, without stopping, these ten miles
I have knocked at your door, and no one answered,
I have peeped into your room, at your seat beside the table
Perhaps you are out riding in your canopied chair,
Or fishing, more likely, in some autumn pool
Sorry though I am to be missing you,
You have become my meditation —
The beauty of your grasses, fresh with rain,
And close beside your window the music of your pines.
I take into my being all that I see and hear,
Soothing my senses, quieting my heart,
And though there be neither host nor guest,
Have I not reasoned a visit complete?
. . . After enough, I have gone down the mountain
Why should I wait for you any longer?

CHI WU CH IEN

Chi wu Ch ien

潛毋茶

A BOAT IN SPRING ON JO YA LAKE

Thoughtful elation has no end
Onward I bear it to whatever come
And my boat and I before the evening breeze
Passing flowers, entering the lake
Turn at nightfall toward the western valley,
Where I watch the south star over the mountain
And a mist that rises hovering soft
And the low moon slanting through the trees
And I choose to put away from me every worldly matter
And only to be an old man with a fishing pole

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Chu Ch'ing-yu

餘慶朱

A SONG OF THE PALACE

Now that the palace-gate has softly closed on its flowers,
Ladies file out to their pavilion of jade,
Abrim to the lips with imperial gossip
But not daring to breathe it with a parrot among them

ON THE EVE OF GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS
TO SECRETARY CHANG

Out go the great red wedding-chamber candles
Tomorrow in state the bride faces your parents
She has finished preparing, she asks of you meekly
Whether her eyebrows are painted in fashion.

CHUAN TE YÜ

Chuan Te yü

輿德權

THE JADE DRESSING TABLE

Last night my girdle came undone
And this morning a luck beetle flew over my bed
So here are my paints and here are my powders —
And a welcome for my yoke again

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Han Hung

翺 韓

AFTER THE DAY OF NO FIRE

Petals of spring fly all through the city
From the wind in the willows of the Imperial River
And at dusk, from the palace, candles are given out
To light first the mansions of the Five Great Lords.

(1)

AN AUTUMN EVENING

HARMONIZING CH'ÊNG CHIN'S POEM

While a cold wind is creeping under my mat,
And the city's naked wall grows pale with the autumn moon,
I see a lone wildgoose crossing the River of Stars,
And I hear, on stone in the night, thousands of washing-
mallets .

But, instead of wishing the season, as it goes,
To bear me also far away,
I have found your poem so beautiful
That I forget the homing birds.

(9, 10)

HAN HUNG

INSCRIBED

IN THE TEMPLE OF THE WANDERING GENIE

I face high over this enchanted lodge the Court of the Five Cities
of Heaven

And I see a countryside blue and still after the long rain
The distant peaks and trees of Ch in merge into twilight
And Han Palace washing stones make their autumnal echoes
Thin pine shadows brush the outdoor pulpit
And grasses blow their fragrance into my little cave
Who need be craving a world beyond this one?
Here among men are the Purple Hills!

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Han Wu

倅 韓

COOLER WEATHER

Her jade-green alcove curtained thick with silk,
Her vermillion screen with its pattern of flowers,
Her eight-foot dragon-beard mat and her quilt brocaded in squares
Are ready now for nights that are neither warm nor cold

(12)

Han Yu

龔 韓

MOUNTAIN STONES

Rough were the mountain stones and the path very narrow
 And when I reached the temple bats were in the dusk
 I climbed to the hall sat on the steps and drank the rain washed
 air

Among the round gardenia pods and huge banana leaves
 On the old wall said the priest were Buddhas finely painted
 And he brought a light and showed me and I called them won-
 derful

He spread the bed dusted the mats and made my supper ready
 And though the food was coarse it satisfied my hunger
 At midnight while I lay there not hearing even an insect
 The mountain moon with her pure light entered my door
 At dawn I left the mountain and alone lost my way
 In and out up and down while a heavy mist
 Made brook and mountain green and purple brightening every
 thing

I am passing sometimes pines and oaks which ten men could
 not girdle

I am treading pebbles barefoot in swift running water —
 Its ripples purify my ear while a soft wind blows my gar-
 ments

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

These are the things which, in themselves, make life happy
Why should we be hemmed about and hampered with people?
O chosen pupils, far behind me in my own country,
What if I spent my old age here and never went back home?

ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE MOON

TO SUB-OFFICIAL CHANG

The fine clouds have opened and the River of Stars is gone,
A clear wind blows across the sky, and the moon widens its wave
The sand is smooth, the water still, no sound and no shadow,
As I offer you a cup of wine, asking you to sing
But so sad is this song of yours and so bitter your voice
That before I finish listening my tears have become a rain
"Where Lake Tung-t'ing is joined to the sky by the lofty Nine-
Doubt Mountain,
Dragons, crocodiles, rise and sink, apes, flying foxes, whimper
At a ten to one risk of death I have reached my official post,
Where lonely I live and hushed, as though I were in hiding
I leave my bed, afraid of snakes, I eat, fearing poisons,
The air of the lake is putrid, breathing its evil odours
Yesterday, by the district office, the great drum was announcing
The crowning of an emperor, a change in the realm
The edict granting pardons runs three hundred miles a day,
All those who were to die have had their sentences commuted,
The unseated are promoted and exiles are recalled,

Corruptions are abolished clean officers appointed
 My superior sent my name in but the governor would not listen
 And has only transferred me to this barbaric place
 My rank is very low and useless to refer to
 They might punish me with lashes in the dust of the street
 Most of my fellow exiles are now returning home—
 A journey which to me is a heaven beyond climbing
 Stop your song I beg you and listen to mine
 A song that is utterly different from yours
 Tonight is the loveliest moon of the year
 All else is with fate not ours to control
 But refusing this wine may we choose more tomorrow?

STOPPING AT A TEMPLE ON HENG MOUNTAIN
 I INSCRIBE THIS POEM IN THE GATE TOWER

The five Holy Mountains have the rank of the Three Dukes
 The other four make a ring with the Sung Mountain midmost
 To this one in the fire ruled south where evil signs are rife,
 Heaven gave divine power ordaining it a peer
 All the clouds and hazes are hidden in its girdle
 And its forehead is beholden only by a few
 I came here in autumn, during the rainy season
 When the sky was overcast and the clear wind gone •
 I quieted my mind and prayed hoping for an answer
 For assuredly righteous thinking reaches to high heaven
 And soon all the mountain peaks were showing me their faces

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

I looked up at a pinnacle that held the clean blue sky
The wide Purple Canopy joined the Celestial Column,
The Stone Granary leapt, while the Fire God stood still
Moved by this token, I dismounted to offer thanks
A long path of pine and cypress led to the temple
Its white walls and purple pillars shone, and the vivid colour
Of gods and devils filled the place with patterns of red and blue
I climbed the steps and, bending down to sacrifice, besought
That my pure heart might be welcome, in spite of my humble
offering

The old priest professed to know the judgment of the God
He was polite and reverent, making many bows
He handed me divinity-cups, he showed me how to use them
And told me that my fortune was the very best of all
Though exiled to a barbarous land, mine is a happy life
Plain food and plain clothes are all I ever wanted
To be prince, duke, premier, general, was never my desire,
And if the God would bless me, what better could he grant than
this? —

At night I lie down to sleep in the top of a high tower,
While moon and stars glimmer through the darkness of the
clouds

Apes call, a bell sounds And ready for dawn,
I see arise, far in the east, the cold bright sun

(13, 13a, 14, 14a)

“

A POEM ON THE STONE DRUMS

Chang handed me this tracing from the stone drums
 Beseeching me to write a poem on the stone drums
 Tu Fu has gone Li Po is dead
 What can my poor talent do for the stone drums?

When the Chou power waned and China was bubbling
 Emperor Hsüan up in wrath waved his holy spear
 And opened his Great Audience receiving all the tributes
 Of kings and lords who came to him with a tune of clanging
 weapons

They held a hunt in Chiyang and proved their marksmanship
 Fallen birds and animals were strewn three thousand miles
 And the exploit was recorded to inform new generations
 Cut out of jutting cliffs these drums made of stone —
 On which poets and artisans all of the first order
 Had indited and chiselled — were set in the deep mountains
 To be washed by rain baked by sun burned by wildfire
 Eyed by evil spirits and protected by the gods

Where can he have found the tracing on this paper? —
 True to the original not altered by a hair
 The meaning deep the phrases cryptic difficult to read
 And the style of the characters neither square nor tadpole
 Time has not yet vanquished the beauty of these letters —
 Looking like sharp daggers that pierce live crocodiles •
 Like phoenix mates dancing like angels hovering down
 Like trees of jade and coral with interlocking branches
 Like golden cord and iron chain tied together tight

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Like incense-tripods flung in the sea, like dragons mounting
heaven

Historians, gathering ancient poems, forgot to gather these,
To make the two Books of Musical Song more colourful and
striking;

Confucius journeyed in the west, but not to the Ch'in Kingdom,
He chose our planet and our stars but missed the sun and
moon .

I who am fond of antiquity, was born too late
And, thinking of these wonderful things, cannot hold back my
tears

I remember, when I was awarded my highest degree,
During the first year of Yuan-ho,
How a friend of mine, then at the western camp,
Offered to assist me in removing these old relics
I bathed and changed, then made my plea to the college president
And urged on him the rareness of these most precious things
They could be wrapped in rugs, be packed and sent in boxes
And carried on only a few camels ten stone drums
To grace the Imperial Temple like the Incense-Pot of Kao —
Or their lustre and their value would increase a hundredfold,
If the monarch would present them to the university,
Where students could study them and doubtless decipher them,
And multitudes, attracted to the capital of culture
From all corners of the Empire, would be quick to gather
We could scour the moss, pick out the dirt, restore the original
surface,
And lodge them in a fitting and secure place for ever,
Covered by a massive building with wide eaves

Where nothing more might happen to them as it had before
 But government officials grow fixed in their ways
 And never will initiate beyond old precedent
 So herd boys strike the drums for fire, cows polish horns on them
 With no one to handle them reverentially
 Still ageing and decaying soon they may be effaced
 Six years I have sighed for them chanting toward the west
 The familiar script of Wang Hsi-chih beautiful though it was
 Could be had several pages just for a few white geese!
 But now eight dynasties after the Chou and all the wars over
 Why should there be nobody caring for these drums?
 The Empire is at peace the government free
 Poets again are honoured and Confucians and Mencians
 Oh how may this petition be carried to the throne?
 It needs indeed an eloquent flow like a cataract —
 But alas my voice has broken in my song of the stone drums
 To a sound of supplication choked with its own tears

(15 16)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Hé Chih-chang

章知賀

COMING HOME

I left home young I return old,
Speaking as then, but with hair grown thin,
And my children, meeting me, do not know me
They smile and say "Stranger, where do you come from?"

(17)

Hsü Hun

許 軍

INSCRIBED IN THE INN AT TUNG GATE
ON AN AUTUMN TRIP TO THE CAPITAL

Red leaves are fluttering down the twilight
Past this arbour where I take my wine
Cloud rifts are blowing toward Great Flower Mountain
And a shower is crossing the Middle Ridge
I can see trees colouring a distant wall
I can hear the river seeking the sea
As I the Imperial City tomorrow —
But I dream of woodsmen and fishermen

(14)

EARLY AUTUMN

There's a harp in the midnight playing clear
While the west wind rustles a green vine
There's a low cloud touching the jade white dew
And an early wildgoose in the River of Stars

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Night in the tall trees clings to dawn,
Light makes folds in the distant hills,
And here on the Huai, by one falling leaf,
I can feel a storm on Lake Tung-t'ing

Emperor Hsuan tsung (Ming Huang)

宗 玄

I PASS THROUGH THE LU DUKEDOM
WITH A SIGH AND A SACRIFICE FOR CONFUCIUS

O Master how did the world repay
Your life of long solicitude? —
The Lords of Tsou have misprized your land
And your home has been used as the palace of Lu
You foretold that when phœnixes vanished your fortunes too
would end
You knew that the captured unicorn would be a sign of the close
of your teaching
Can this sacrifice I watch here between two temple pillars
Be the selfsame omen of death you dreamed of long ago?
(4a c d 19 19a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Hsueh Fêng

逢 薛

A PALACE POEM

In twelve chambers the ladies, decked for the day,
Peer afar for their lord from their Fairy-View Lodge,
The golden toad guards the lock on the door-chain,
And the bronze-dragon water-clock drips through the morn-
ing —

Till one of them, tilting a mirror, combs her cloud of hair
And chooses new scent and a change of silk raiment,
For she sees, between screen-panels, deep in the palace,
Eunuchs in court-dress preparing a bed,

Huang fu Jan

冉甫皇

SPRING THOUGHTS

Finch notes and swallow notes tell the new year
But so far are the Town of the Horse and the Dragon Mound
From this our house from these walls and Han Gardens
That the moon takes my heart to the Tartar sky
I have woven in the frame endless words of my grieving
Yet this petal bough is smiling now on my lonely sleep
Oh ask General Tou when his flags will come home
And his triumph be carved on the rock of Yen jan Mountain!

(20)

Kao Shih

滴 高

TO VICE-PREFECTS LI AND WANG
DEGRADED AND TRANSFERRED
TO HSIA-CHUNG AND CH'ANG-SHA

What are you thinking as we part from one another,
Pulling in our horses for the stirrup cups?
Do these tear-streaks mean Wu Valley monkeys all weeping,
Or wildgeese returning with news from Hêng Mountain?
On the river between green maples an autumn sail grows dim,
There are only a few old trees by the wall of the White God
City
But the year is bound to freshen us with a dew of heavenly
favour —
Take heart, we shall soon be together again!
(21, 14)

A SONG OF THE YEN COUNTRY

(Written to Music)

(In the sixth year of Kai yuan a friend returned from the border and showed me the Yen Song Moved by what he told me of the expedition I have written this poem to the same rhymes)

The northeastern border of China was dark with smoke and dust
To repel the savage invaders our generals leaving their families
Strode forth together looking as heroes should look

And having received from the Emperor his most gracious favour
They marched to the beat of gong and drum through the Elm
Pass

They circled the Stone Tablet with a line of waving flags
Till their captains over the Sea of Sand were twanging feathered
orders

The Tartar chieftains hunting fires glimmered along Wolf
Mountain

And heights and rivers were cold and bleak there at the outer
border

But soon the barbarians horses were plunging through wind
and rain

Half of our men at the front were killed but the other half are
living

And still at the camp beautiful girls dance for them and sing
As autumn ends in the grey sand with the grasses all
withered

The few surviving watchers by the lonely wall at sunset

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Serving in a good cause, hold life and the foeman lightly.
And yet, for all that they have done, Elm Pass is still unsafe.
Still at the front, iron armour is worn and battered thin,
And here at home food-sticks are made of jade tears
Still in this southern city young wives' hearts are breaking,
While soldiers at the northern border vainly look toward home
The fury of the wind cuts our men's advance
In a place of death and blue void, with nothingness ahead
Three times a day a cloud of slaughter rises over the camp,
And all night long the hour-drums shake their chilly booming,
Until white swords can be seen again, spattered with red blood
 When death becomes a duty, who stops to think of fame?
Yet in speaking of the rigours of warfare on the desert
We name to this day Li, the great General, who lived long ago

(22)

Ku Kuang

况 願

A PALACE POEM

High above from a jade chamber songs float half way to heaven
The palace girls gay voices are mingled with the wind —
But now they are still and you hear a water-clock drip in the
 Court of the Moon
They have opened the curtain wide they are facing the River of
 Stars

Li Ch'i

顧 李

A FAREWELL TO WÊI WAN
BOUND FOR THE CAPITAL

The travellers' parting-song sounds in the dawn
Last night a first frost came over the river,
And the crying of the wildgeese grieves my sad heart
Bounded by a gloom of cloudy mountains
Here in the Gate City, day will flush cold
And washing-flails quicken by the gardens at twilight —
How long shall the capital content you,
Where the months and the years so vainly go by?

(23)

AN OLD AIR

There once was a man, sent on military missions,
A wanderer, from youth, on the Yu and Yen frontiers
Under 'the horses' hoofs he would meet his foes
And, recklessly risking his seven-foot body,
Would slay whoever dared confront
Those moustaches that bristled like porcupine-quills

There were dark clouds below the hills there were white
clouds above them
But before a man has served full time how can he go back?
In eastern Liao a girl was waiting a girl of fifteen years
Deft with a guitar expert in dance and song
She seems to be fluting even now a reed song of home
Filling every soldier's eyes with homesick tears

A FAREWELL TO MY FRIEND CH EN CHANG FU

In the Fourth month the south wind blows plains of yellow barley
Date flowers have not faded yet and lakka leaves are long
The green peak that we left at dawn we still can see at evening
While our horses whinny on the road eager to turn homeward
Chen my friend you have always been a great and good
man
With your dragon's moustache tiger's eyebrows and your massive
forehead
In your bosom you have shelved away ten thousand volumes
You have held your head high never bowed it in the dust
After buying us wine and pledging us here at the east
ern gate
And taking things as lightly as a wildgoose feather
Flat you lie tippy forgetting the white sun
But now and then you open your eyes and gaze at a high lone
cloud
The tide head of the long river joins the darkening sky

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

The ferryman beaches his boat It has grown too late to sail.
And people on their way from Chêng cannot go home,
And people from Lo-yang sigh with disappointment
 I have heard about the many friends around your wood-
 land dwelling
Yesterday you were dismissed Are they your friends today?

A LUTE SONG

Our host, providing abundant wine to make the night mellow,
Asks his guest from Yang-chou to play for us on the lute
Toward the moon that whitens the city-wall, black crows are fly-
 ing,
Frost is on ten thousand trees, and the wind blows through our
 clothes,
But a copper stove has added its light to that of flowery candles,
And the lute plays *The Green Water*, and then *The Queen of Ch'u*
Once it has begun to play, there is no other sound
A spell is on the banquet, while the stars grow thin
But three hundred miles from here, in Huai, official duties await
 him,
And so it's farewell, and the road again, under cloudy mountains

ON HEARING TUNG PLAY THE FLAGEOLET
A POEM TO PALACE ATTENDANT FANG

When this melody for the flageolet was made by Lady Tsai,
When long ago one by one she sang its eighteen stanzas
Even the Tartars were shedding tears into the border grasses
And the envoy of China was heart broken turning back home
with his escort

Cold fires now of old battles are grey on ancient forts
And the wilderness is shadowed with white new flying snow
When the player first brushes the Shang string and the
Chuch and then the Yu

Autumn leaves in all four quarters are shaken with a murmur
Tung the master

Must have been taught in heaven

Demons come from the deep pine wood and stealthily listen
To music slow then quick following his hand

Now far away now near again according to his heart

A hundred birds from an empty mountain scatter and return

Three thousand miles of floating clouds darken and lighten

A wildgoose fledgling left behind cries for its flock

And a Tartar child for the mother he loves

Then river waves are calmed

And birds are mute that were singing

And Wu-chu tribes are homesick for their distant land

And out of the dust of Siberian steppes rises a plaintive sorrow

Suddenly the low sound leaps to a freer tune

Like a long wind swaying a forest a downpour breaking tiles

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A cascade through the air, flying over tree-tops.

A wild deer calls to his fellows. He is running among the mansions

In the corner of the capital by the Eastern Palace wall .

Phoenix Lake lies opposite the Gate of Green Jade,

But how can fame and profit concern a man of genius?

Day and night I long for him to bring his lute again

(23)

ON HEARING AN WAN-SHAN PLAY THE REED-PIPE

Bamboo from the southern hills was used to make this pipe

And its music, that was introduced from Persia first of all,

Has taken on new magic through later use in China

And now the Tartar from Liang-chou, blowing it for me,

Drawing a sigh from whosoever hears it,

Is bringing to a wanderer's eyes homesick tears . .

Many like to listen, but few understand

To and fro at will there's a long wind flying,

Dry mulberry-trees, old cypresses, trembling in its chill

There are nine baby phoenixes, outcrying one another,

A dragon and a tiger spring up at the same moment,

Then in a hundred waterfalls ten thousand songs of autumn

Are suddenly changing to *The Yu-yang Lament*,

And when yellow clouds grow thin and the white sun darkens,

They are changing still again to *Spring in the Willow Trees*
 Like Imperial Garden flowers brightening the eye with beauty
 Are the high hall candles we have lighted this cold night
 And with every cup of wine goes another round of music

AN OLD WAR SONG

(*Written to Music*)

Through the bright day up the mountain we scan the sky for a
 war torch

At yellow dusk we water our horses in the boundary river
 And when the throb of watch-drums hangs in the sandy wind
 We hear the guitar of the Chinese Princess telling her endless
 woe

Three thousand miles without a town nothing but camps
 Till the heavy sky joins the wide desert in snow
 With their plaintive calls barbarian wildgeese fly from night to
 night

And children of the Tartars have many tears to shed
 But we hear that the Jade Pass is still under siege
 And soon we stake our lives upon our light war chariots
 Each year we bury in the desert bones unnumbered
 Yet we only watch for grape vines coming into China

(24 25)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Li P'in

頻 李

CROSSING THE HAN RIVER

Away from home, I was longing for news
Winter after winter, spring after spring
Now, nearing my village, meeting people,
I dare not ask a single question

Li Po

白 李

IN THE QUIET NIGHT

So bright a gleam on the foot of my bed —
 Could there have been a frost already?
 Lifting myself to look I found that it was moonlight
 Sinking back again, I thought suddenly of home

A BITTER LOVE

How beautiful she looks opening the pearly casement
 And how quiet she leans and how troubled her brow is!
 You may see the tears now bright on her cheek
 But not the man she so bitterly loves

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A SIGH FROM A STAIRCASE OF JADE

(Written to Music)

Her jade-white staircase is cold with dew,
Her silk soles are wet, she lingered there so long
Behind her closed casement, why is she still waiting,
Watching through its crystal pane the glow of the autumn moon?
(27)

A FAREWELL TO MÊNG HAO-JAN ON HIS WAY TO YANG-CHOU

You have left me behind, old friend, at the Yellow Crane Terrace,
On your way to visit Yang-chou in the misty month of flowers,
Your sail, a single shadow, becomes one with the blue sky,
Till now I see only the river, on its way to heaven
(28, 28a)

THROUGH THE YANG-TSZE GORGES

From the walls of Po-ti high in the coloured dawn
To Kiang-ling by night-fall is three hundred miles,
Yet monkeys are still calling on both banks behind me
To my boat these ten thousand mountains away
(29)

A SONG OF PURE HAPPINESS

(Written to Music for Lady Yang)

I

Her robe is a cloud her face a flower
Her balcony glimmering with the bright spring dew
Is either the tip of earth's Jade Mountain
Or a moon-edged roof of paradise

II

There's a perfume stealing moist from a shaft of red blossom
And a mist through the heart from the magical Hill of Wu —
The palaces of China have never known such beauty —
Not even Flying Swallow with all her glittering garments

III

Lovely now together his lady and his flowers
Lighten for ever the Emperor's eye
As he listens to the sighing of the far spring wind
Where she leans on a railing in the Aloe Pavilion

(4 4b 26 26a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A MESSAGE TO MÊNG HAO-JAN

Master, I hail you from my heart,
And your fame arisen to the skies
Renouncing in ruddy youth the importance of hat and chariot,
You chose pine-trees and clouds, and now, white-haired,
Drunk with the moon, a sage of dreams,
Flower-bewitched, you are deaf to the Emperor . . .
High mountain, how I long to reach you,
Breathing your sweetness even here!

(32a)

BIDDING A FRIEND FAREWELL AT CHING-MÊN FERRY

Sailing far off from Ching-mên Ferry,
Soon you will be with people in the south,
Where the mountains end and the plains begin
And the river winds through wilderness .
The moon is lifted like a mirror,
Sea-clouds gleam like palaces,
And the water has brought you a touch of home
To draw your boat three hundred miles

A FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

With a blue line of mountains north of the wall
 And east of the city a white curve of water
 Here you must leave me and drift away
 Like a loosened water plant hundreds of miles
 I shall think of you in a floating cloud
 So in the sunset think of me

We wave our hands to say good bye
 And my horse is neighing again and again

ON HEARING CHUN
 THE BUDDHIST MONK FROM SHU
 PLAY HIS LUTE

The monk from Shu with his green silk lute-case
 Walking west down O mei Mountain
 Has brought me by one touch of the strings
 The breath of pines in a thousand valleys
 I hear him in the cleansing brook
 I hear him in the icy bells
 And I feel no change though the mountain darkens
 And cloudy autumn heaps the sky

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

THOUGHTS OF OLD TIME FROM A NIGHT-MOORING UNDER MOUNT NIU-CHU

This night to the west of the river-brim
There is not one cloud in the whole blue sky,
As I watch from my deck the autumn moon,
Vainly remembering old General Hsieh. .
I have poems, I can read,
He heard others, but not mine
. Tomorrow I shall hoist my sail,
With fallen maple-leaves behind me

(30)

ON CLIMBING IN NAN-KING TO THE TERRACE OF PHŒNIXES

Phœnixes that played here once, so that the place was
named for them,
Have abandoned it now to this desolate river,
The paths of Wu Palace are crooked with weeds,
The garments of Chin are ancient dust
Like this green horizon halving the Three Peaks,
Like this Island of White Egrets dividing the river,
A cloud has arisen between the Light of Heaven and me,
To hide his city from my melancholy heart

(6, 31)

DOWN CHUNG NAN MOUNTAIN
TO THE KIND PILLOW AND BOWL OF HU SSU

Down the blue mountain in the evening
Moonlight was my homeward escort
Looking back I saw my path
Lie in levels of deep shadow
I was passing the farm house of a friend
When his children called from a gate of thorn
And led me twining through jade bamboos
Where green vines caught and held my clothes
And I was glad of a chance to rest
And glad of a chance to drink with my friend
We sang to the tune of the wind in the pines
And we finished our songs as the stars went down
When I being drunk and my friend more than happy
Between us we forgot the world

(32)

DRINKING ALONE WITH THE MOON

From a pot of wine among the flowers
I drank alone There was no one with me — ●
Till raising my cup I asked the bright moon
To bring me my shadow and make us three
Alas the moon was unable to drink

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And my shadow tagged me vacantly,
But still for a while I had these friends
To cheer me through the end of spring . . .
I sang The moon encouraged me
I danced My shadow tumbled after
As long as I knew, we were boon companions
And then I was drunk, and we lost one another.
Shall goodwill ever be secure?
I watch the long road of the River of Stars

IN SPRING

Your grasses up north are as blue as jade,
Our mulberries here curve green-threaded branches,
And at last you think of returning home,
Now when my heart is almost broken .
O breeze of the spring, since I dare not know you,
Why part the silk curtains by my bed?

THE MOON AT THE FORTIFIED PASS

(Written to Music)

The bright moon lifts from the Mountain of Heaven
In an infinite haze of cloud and sea,
And the wind, that has come a thousand miles,

Beats at the Jade Pass battlements
 China marches its men down Po-teng Road
 While Tartar troops peer across blue waters of the bay
 And since not one battle famous in history
 Sent all its fighters back again
 The soldiers turn round looking toward the border
 And think of home with wistful eyes
 And of those tonight in the upper chambers
 Who toss and sigh and cannot rest

A SONG OF AN AUTUMN MIDNIGHT

(Written to a Su-chou Melody)

A slip of the moon hangs over the capital
 Ten thousand washing mallets are pounding
 And the autumn wind is blowing my heart
 For ever and ever toward the Jade Pass
 Oh when will the Tartar troops be conquered
 And my husband come back from the long campaign!

A SONG OF CH ANG KAN

(Written to Music)

My hair had hardly covered my forehead
 I was picking flowers playing by my door

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

When you, my lover, on a bamboo horse,
Came trotting in circles and throwing green plums
We lived near together on a lane in Ch'ang-kan,
Both of us young and happy-hearted

At fourteen I became your wife,
So bashful that I dared not smile,
And I lowered my head toward a dark corner
And would not turn to your thousand calls,
But at fifteen I straightened my brows and laughed,
Learning that no dust could ever seal our love,
That even unto death I would await you by my post
And would never lose heart in the tower of silent watching

Then when I was sixteen, you left on a long journey
Through the Gorges of Ch'u-t'ang, of rock and whirling water.
And then came the Fifth-month, more than I could bear,
And I tried to hear the monkeys in your lofty far-off sky
Your footprints by our door, where I had watched you go,
Were hidden, every one of them, under green moss,
Hidden under moss too deep to sweep away
And the first autumn wind added fallen leaves
And now, in the Eighth-month, yellowing butterflies
Hover, two by two, in our west-garden grasses . . .
And, because of all this, my heart is breaking
And I fear for my bright cheeks, lest they fade

Oh, at last, when you return through the three Pa districts,
Send me a message home ahead!
And I will come and meet you and will never mind the distance,
All the way to Chang-fêng Sha

(33)

A SONG OF LU MOUNTAIN

To CENSOR LU HSU-CHOU

I am the madman of the Ch u country
 Who sang a mad song disputing Confucius
 Holding in my hand a staff of green jade
 I have crossed since morning at the Yellow Crane Terrace
 All five Holy Mountains without a thought of distance
 According to the one constant habit of my life
 Lu Mountain stands beside the Southern Dipper
 In clouds reaching silken like a nine panelled screen
 With its shadows in a crystal lake deepening the green water
 The Golden Gate opens into two mountain ranges
 A silver stream is hanging down to three stone bridges
 Within sight of the mighty Tripod Falls
 Ledges of cliff and winding trails lead to blue sky
 And a flush of cloud in the morning sun
 Whence no flight of birds could be blown into Wu
 I climb to the top I survey the whole world
 I see the long river that runs beyond return
 Yellow clouds that winds have driven hundreds of miles
 And a snow peak whitely circled by the swirl of a ninefold stream.
 And so I am singing a song of Lu Mountain
 A song that is born of the breath of Lu Mountain
 Where the Stone Mirror makes the heart's purity purer
 And green moss has buried the footsteps of Hsieh
 I have eaten the immortal pellet and rid of the world's troubles
 Before the lute's third playing have achieved my element

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Far away I watch the angels riding coloured clouds
Toward heaven's Jade City, with hibiscus in their hands
And so, when I have traversed the nine sections of the world,
I will follow Saint Lu-ao up the Great Purity

(14, 34, 34a)

T' IEN-MU MOUNTAIN ASCENDED IN A DREAM

A seafaring visitor will talk about Japan,
Which waters and mists conceal beyond approach;
But Yueh people talk about Heavenly Mother Mountain,
Still seen through its varying deepnesses of cloud
In a straight line to heaven, its summit enters heaven,
Tops the five Holy Peaks, and casts a shadow through China
With the hundred-mile length of the Heavenly Terrace Range,
Which, just at this point, begins turning southeast

My heart and my dreams are in Wu and Yueh
And they cross Mirror Lake all night in the moon.
And the moon lights my shadow
And me to Yien River —
With the hermitage of Hsieh still there
And the monkeys calling clearly over ripples of green water.
I wear his pegged boots
Up a ladder of blue cloud,
Sunny ocean half-way,
Holy cock-crow in space,
Myriad peaks and more valleys and nowhere a road.

Flowers lure me rocks ease me Day suddenly ends
 Bears dragons tempestuous on mountain and river,
 Startle the forest and make the heights tremble
 Clouds darken with darkness of rain
 Streams pale with pallor of mist
 The Gods of Thunder and Lightning
 Shatter the whole range
 The stone gate breaks asunder
 Venting in the pit of heaven
 An impenetrable shadow

But now the sun and moon illumine a gold and silver terrace
 And clad in rainbow garments riding on the wind
 Come the queens of all the clouds descending one by one
 With tigers for their lute players and phoenixes for dancers
 Row upon row like fields of hemp range the fairy figures
 I move my soul goes flying
 I wake with a long sigh
 My pillow and my matting
 Are the lost clouds I was in

And this is the way it always is with human joy
 Ten thousand things run for ever like water toward the east
 And so I take my leave of you not knowing for how long

But let me on my green slope raise a white deer
 And ride to you great mountain when I have need of you
 Oh how can I gravely bow and scrape to men of high rank and
 men of high office
 Who never will suffer being shown an honest hearted face!

(34a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

PARTING AT A WINE-SHOP IN NAN-KING

A wind, bringing willow-cotton, sweetens the shop,
And a girl from Wu, pouring wine, urges me to share it
With my comrades of the city who are here to see me off;
And as each of them drains his cup, I say to him in parting,
Oh, go and ask this river running to the east
If it can travel farther than a friend's love!

A FAREWELL TO SECRETARY SHU-YUN AT THE HSIEH T'IAO VILLA IN HSUAN-CHOU

Since yesterday had to throw me and bolt,
Today has hurt my heart even more
The autumn wildgeese have a long wind for escort
As I face them from this villa, drinking my wine
The bones of great writers are your brushes, in the School of
Heaven,
And I am a Lesser Hsieh growing up by your side
We both are exalted to distant thought,
Aspiring to the sky and the bright moon
But since water still flows, though we cut it with our swords,
And sorrows return, though we drown them with wine,
Since the world can in no way answer our craving,
I will loosen my hair tomorrow and take to a fishing-boat

HARD ROADS IN SHU

(Written to Music)

Oh but it is high and very dangerous!
 Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky
 Until two rulers of this region
 Pushed their way through in the misty ages
 Forty-eight thousand years had passed
 With nobody arriving across the Chin border
 And the Great White Mountain westward still has only a bird's
 path
 Up to the summit of O méi Peak —
 Which was broken once by an earthquake and there were brave
 men lost
 Just finishing the stone rungs of their ladder toward heaven
 High as on a tall flag six dragons drive the sun
 While the river far below lashes its twisted course
 Such height would be hard going for even a yellow crane
 So pity the poor monkeys who have only paws to use
 The Mountain of Green Clay is formed of many circles —
 Each hundred steps we have to turn nine turns among its mounds
 Panting we brush Orion and pass the Well Star
 Then holding our chests with our hands and sinking to the
 ground with a groan
 We wonder if this westward trail will never have an end
 The formidable path ahead grows darker darker still
 With nothing heard but the call of birds hemmed in by the ancient
 forest

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Male birds smoothly wheeling, following the females,
And there come to us the melancholy voices of the cuckoos
Out on the empty mountain, under the lonely moon
Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky
Even to hear of it turns the cheek pale,
With the highest crag barely a foot below heaven
Dry pines hang, head down, from the face of the cliffs,
And a thousand plunging cataracts outroar one another
And send through ten thousand valleys a thunder of spinning
stones

With all this danger upon danger,
Why do people come here who live at a safe distance?
Though Dagger-Tower Pass be firm and grim,
And while one man guards it
Ten thousand cannot force it,
What if he be not loyal,
But a wolf toward his fellows?

There are ravenous tigers to fear in the day
And venomous reptiles in the night
With their teeth and their fangs ready
To cut people down like hemp

Though the City of Silk be delectable, I would rather turn
home quickly
Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky . . .
But I still face westward with a dreary moan

ENDLESS YEARNING

(Written to Music)

I

I am endlessly yearning
To be in Ch ang an

Insects hum of autumn by the gold brim of the well
A thin frost glistens like little mirrors on my cold mat
The high lantern flickers and deeper grows my longing
I lift the shade and with many a sigh gaze upon the moon
Single as a flower centred from the clouds
Above I see the blueness and deepness of sky
Below I see the greenness and the restlessness of water
Heaven is high earth wide bitter between them flies my sorrow
Can I dream through the gateway over the mountain?
Endless longing
Breaks my heart

II

The sun has set and a mist is in the flowers
And the moon grows very white and people sad and sleepless
A Chao harp has just been laid mute on its phoenix holder
And a Shu lute begins to sound its mandarin-duck strings
Since nobody can bear to you the burden of my song
Would that it might follow the spring wind to Yen jan Mountain
I think of you far away beyond the blue sky

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And my eyes that once were sparkling
Are now a well of tears

Oh, if ever you should doubt this aching of my heart,
Here in my bright mirror come back and look at me!"

(37)

THE HARD ROAD

(Written to Music)

Pure wine costs, for the golden cup, ten thousand coppers a flagon,
And a jade plate of dainty food calls for a million coins
I fling aside my food-sticks and cup, I cannot eat nor drink
I pull out my dagger, I peer four ways in vain
I would cross the Yellow River, but ice chokes the ferry,
I would climb the T'ai-hang Mountains, but the sky is blind with
snow

I would sit and poise a fishing-pole, lazy by a brook —
But I suddenly dream of riding a boat, sailing for the sun . . .

Journeying is hard,

Journeying is hard

There are many turnings —

Which am I to follow?

I will mount a long wind some day and break the heavy waves
And set my cloudy sail straight and bridge the deep, deep sea

BRINGING IN THE WINE

(Written to Music)

See how the Yellow River's waters move out of heaven
 Entering the ocean never to return
 See how lovely locks in bright mirrors in high chambers
 Though silken black at morning have changed by night to snow
 Oh let a man of spirit venture where he pleases
 And never tip his golden cup empty toward the moon!
 Since heaven gave the talent let it be employed!
 Spin a thousand pieces of silver all of them come back!
 Cook a sheep kill a cow whet the appetite
 And make me of three hundred bowls one long drink!
 To the old master Ts'en
 And the young scholar Tan-ch'iu,
 Bring in the wine!
 Let your cups never rest!
 Let me sing you a song!
 Let your ears attend!
 What are bell and drum rare dishes and treasure?
 Let me be forever drunk and never come to reason!
 Sober men of olden days and sages are forgotten
 And only the great drinkers are famous for all time
 Prince Ch'en paid at a banquet in the Palace of Perfection
 Ten thousand coins for a cask of wine with many a laugh and
 quip
 Why say my host that your money is gone?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Go and buy wine and we'll drink it together!
My flower-dappled horse,
My furs worth a thousand,
Hand them to the boy to exchange for good wine,
And we'll drown away the woes of ten thousand generations!

LI SHANG YIN

Li Shang yin

陰商李

THE LO YU TOMBS

With twilight shadows in my heart
I have driven up among the Lo-yu Tombs
To see the sun for all his glory
Buried by the coming night

A NOTE ON A RAINY NIGHT
TO A FRIEND IN THE NORTH

You ask me when I am coming I do not know
I dream of your mountains and autumn pools brimming all night
with the rain
Oh when shall we be trimming wicks again together in your
western window?
When shall I be hearing your voice again all night in the rain?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A MESSAGE TO SECRETARY LING-HU

I am far from the clouds of Sung Mountain, a long way
from trees in Ch'in,
And I send to you a message carried by two carp
— Absent this autumn from the Prince's garden,
There's a poet at Mao-ling sick in the rain

(39, 39a)

THERE IS ONLY ONE

There is only one Carved-Cloud, exquisite always —
Yet she dreads the spring, blowing cold in the palace,
When her husband, a Knight of the Golden Tortoise,
Will leave her sweet bed, to be early at court

(40)

THE SUÊI PALACE

When gaily the Emperor toured the south
Contrary to every warning,
His whole empire cut brocades,
Half for wheel-guards, half for sails

(4a)

LI SHANG YIN

THE JADE POOL

The Mother of Heaven in her window by the Jade Pool
Hears *The Yellow Bamboo Song* shaking the whole earth
Where is Emperor Mu with his eight horses running
Ten thousand miles a day? Why has he never come back?

(41)

TO THE MOON GODDESS

Now that a candle shadow stands on the screen of carven marble
And the River of Heaven slants and the morning stars are low
Are you sorry for having stolen the potion that has set you
Over purple seas and blue skies to brood through the long
nights?

(42 4b)

CHIA YI

When the Emperor sought guidance from wise men from exiles
He found no calmer wisdom than that of young Chia
And assigned him the foremost council seat at midnight
Yet asked him about gods instead of about people

(43)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A CICADA

Pure of heart and therefore hungry,
All night long you have sung in vain —
Oh, this final broken indrawn breath
Among the green indifferent trees!
Yes, I have gone like a piece of driftwood,
I have let my garden fill with weeds . . .
I bless you for your true advice
To live as pure a life as yours

(44)

WIND AND RAIN

I ponder on the poem of *The Precious Dagger*.
My road has wound through many years
 Now yellow leaves are shaken with a gale,
Yet piping and fiddling keep the Blue Houses merry
On the surface, I seem to be glad of new people,
But doomed to leave old friends behind me,
I cry out from my heart for Shin-fêng wine
To melt away my thousand woes

(45, 45a)

LI SHANG YIN

FALLING PETALS

Gone is the guest from the Chamber of Rank
And petals confused in my little garden
Zigzagging down my crooked path
Escort like dancers the setting sun
Oh how can I bear to sweep them away?
To a sad-eyed watcher they never return
Heart's fragrance is spent with the ending of spring
And nothing left but a tear stained robe

THOUGHTS IN THE COLD

You are gone The river is high at my door
Cicadas are mute on dew laden boughs
This is a moment when thoughts enter deep
I stand alone for a long while
The North Star is nearer to me now than spring
And couriers from your southland never arrive —
Yet I doubt my dream on the far horizon
That you have found another friend

•

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

NORTH AMONG GREEN VINES

Where the sun has entered the western hills,
I look for a monk in his little straw hut,
But only the fallen leaves are at home,
And I turn through chilling levels of cloud
I hear a stone gong in the dusk,
I lean full-weight on my slender staff .
How within this world, within this grain of dust,
Can there be any room for the passions of men?

THE INLAID HARP

I wonder why my inlaid harp has fifty strings,
Each with its flower-like fret an interval of youth
The sage Chuang-tzŭ is day-dreaming, bewitched by butterflies,
The spring-heart of Emperor Wang is crying in a cuckoo,
Mermen weep their pearly tears down a moon-green sea,
Blue fields are breathing their jade to the sun
And a moment that ought to have lasted for ever
Has come and gone before I knew

LI SHANG YIN

TO ONE UNNAMED

The stars of last night and the wind of last night
Are west of the Painted Chamber and east of Cinnamon Hall
 Though I have for my body no wings like those of the bright
 coloured phoenix,
Yet I feel the harmonious heart beat of the Sacred Unicorn
Across the spring wine while it warms me I prompt you how
 to bet
Where group by group we are throwing dice in the light of a
 crimson lamp
Till the rolling of a drum alas, calls me to my duties
And I mount my horse and ride away like a water plant cut
 adrift

(47)

THE PALACE OF THE SUEI EMPEROR

His Palace of Purple Spring has been taken by mist and cloud
As he would have taken all Yang-chou to be his private do-
 main
But for the seal of imperial jade being seized by the first Tang
 Emperor
He would have bounded with his silken sails the limits of the
 world
Fire flies are gone now have left the weathered grasses
But still among the weeping willows crows perch at twilight

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

If he meets, there underground, the Later Ch'ên Emperor,
Do you think that they will mention *A Song of Courtyard
Flowers?*

(4a)

TO ONE UNNAMED

I

You said you would come, but you did not, and you left me with
no other trace

Than the moonlight on your tower at the fifth-watch bell

I cry for you forever gone, I cannot waken yet,

I try to read your hurried note, I find the ink too pale

. Blue burns your candle in its kingfisher-feather lantern

And a sweet breath steals from your hibiscus-broidered curtain

But far beyond my reach is the Enchanted Mountain,

And you are on the other side, ten thousand peaks away

II

A misty rain comes blowing with a wind from the east,

And wheels faintly thunder beyond Hibiscus Pool

. . Round the golden-toad lock, incense is creeping,

The jade tiger tells, on its cord, of water being drawn .

A great lady once, from behind a screen, favoured a poor youth,

A fairy queen brought a bridal mat once for the ease of a prince
and then vanished

Must human hearts blossom in spring, like all other flowers?
And of even this bright flame of love, shall there be only ashes?

(48)

IN THE CAMP OF THE SKETCHING BRUSH

Monkeys and birds are still alert for your orders
 And winds and clouds eager to shield your fortress
 You were master of the brush and a sagacious general
 But your Emperor defeated rode the prison-cart
 You were abler than even the greatest Chou statesmen
 Yet less fortunate than the two Shu generals who were killed in
 action
 And though at your birth place a temple has been built to you
 You never finished singing your *Song of the Holy Mountain*
 (49 49c 50)

TO ONE UNNAMED

Time was long before I met her but is longer since we parted
 And the east wind has arisen and a hundred flowers are gone
 And the silk worms of spring will weave until they die
 And every night the candles will weep their wicks away
 Mornings in her mirror she sees her hair-cloud changing
 Yet she dares the chill of moonlight with her evening song
 It is not so very far to her Enchanted Mountain —
 O blue birds be listening! — Bring me what she says!
 (39a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

SPRING RAIN

I am lying in a white-lined coat while the spring approaches,
But am thinking only of the White Gate City where I cannot be
 . There are two red chambers fronting the cold, hidden by the
 rain,
And a lantern on a pearl screen swaying my lone heart homeward
 The long road ahead will be full of new hardship,
With, late in the nights, brief intervals of dream
Oh, to send you this message, this pair of jade ear-rings! —
I watch a lonely wildgoose in three thousand miles of cloud.

(39a)

TO ONE UNNAMED

I

A faint phoenix-tail gauze, fragrant and doubled,
Lines your green canopy, closed for the night
Will your shy face peer round a moon-shaped fan,
And your voice be heard hushing the rattle of my carriage?
It is quiet and quiet where your gold lamp dies,
How far can a pomegranate-blossom whisper?

I will tether my horse to a river willow
And wait for the will of the southwest wind

There are many curtains in your care free house
 Where rapture lasts the whole night long
 What are the lives of angels but dreams
 If they take no lovers into their rooms?
 Storms are ravishing the nut horns
 Moon-dew sweetening cinnamon leaves —
 I know well enough naught can come of this union
 Yet how it serves to ease my heart!

THE HAN MONUMENT

The Son of Heaven in Yuan ho times was martial as a god
 And might be likened only to the Emperors Hsuan and Hsi
 He took an oath to reassert the glory of the empire
 And tribute was brought to his palace from all four quarters
 Western Huai for fifty years had been a bandit country
 Wolves becoming lynxes lynxes becoming bears
 They assailed the mountains and rivers rising from the plains
 With their long spears and sharp lances aimed at the Sun
 But the Emperor had a wise premier by the name of Tu
 Who guarded by spirits against assassination
 Hung at his girdle the seal of state and accepted chief command
 While these savage winds were harrying the flags of the Ruler
 of Heaven
 Generals Suo Wu Ku and T'ung became his paws and claws

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Civil and military experts brought their writing-brushes,
And his recording adviser was wise and resolute
A hundred and forty thousand soldiers, fighting like lions and
tigers,

Captured the bandit chieftains for the Imperial Temple
So complete a victory was a supreme event,
And the Emperor said "To you, Tu, should go the highest
honour,

And your secretary, Yu, should write a record of it "
When Yu had bowed his head, he leapt and danced, saying
"Historical writings on stone and metal are my especial art;
And, since I know the finest brush-work of the old masters,
My duty in this instance is more than merely official,
And I should be at fault if I modestly declined "

The Emperor, on hearing this, nodded many times
And Yu retired and fasted and, in a narrow work-room,
His great brush thick with ink as with drops of rain,
Chose characters like those in the *Canons of Yao and Hsun*,
And a style as in the ancient poems *Ch'ing-miao* and *Shêng-min*
And soon the description was ready, on a sheet of paper
In the morning he laid it, with a bow, on the purple stairs
He memorialized the throne "I, unworthy,
Have dared to record this exploit, for a monument "
The tablet was thirty feet high, the characters large as dippers,
It was set on a sacred tortoise, its columns flanked with dragons

The phrases were strange with deep words that few could understand,

And jealousy entered and malice and reached the Emperor —

LI SHANG YIN

So that a rope a hundred feet long pulled the tablet down
And coarse sand and small stones ground away its face
But literature endures like the universal spirit
And its breath becomes a part of the vitals of all men
The T'ang plate the Confucian tripod are eternal things
Not because of their forms but because of their inscriptions
Sagacious is our sovereign and wise his minister
And high their successes and prosperous their reign
But unless it be recorded by a writing such as this
How may they hope to rival the three and five good rulers?
I wish I could write ten thousand copies to read ten thousand
times
Till spittle ran from my lips and calluses hardened my fingers
And still could hand them down through seventy two generations
As corner stones for Rooms of Great Deeds on the Sacred Moun-
tains

(13 51 6)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Li Tuan

端 李

ON HEARING HER PLAY THE HARP

Her hands of white jade by a window of snow
Are glimmering on a golden-fretted harp
And to draw the quick eye of Chou Yu,
She touches a wrong note now and then.

(52)

LI YI

Li Yi

益 李

A SONG OF THE SOUTHERN RIVER

(Written to Music)

Since I married the merchant of Ch u t ang
He has failed each day to keep his word
Had I thought how regular the tide is
I might rather have chosen a river boy

ON HEARING A FLUTE AT NIGHT
FROM THE WALL OF SHOU HSIANG

The sand below the border mountain lies like snow
And the moon like frost beyond the city wall
And someone somewhere playing a flute
Has made the soldiers homesick all night long

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A BRIEF BUT HAPPY MEETING WITH MY BROTHER-IN-LAW

"MEETING BY ACCIDENT, ONLY TO PART"

After these ten torn wearisome years
We have met again We were both so changed
That hearing first your surname, I thought you a stranger —
Then hearing your given name, I remembered your young
face

All that has happened with the tides
We have told and told till the evening bell. . .
Tomorrow you journey to Yo-chou,
Leaving autumn between us, peak after peak.

LIU CHANG CH ING

Liu Chang ch ing

卿長劉

ON PARTING WITH THE BUDDHIST PILGRIM
LING CH E

From the temple deep in its tender bamboos
Comes the low sound of an evening bell
While the hat of a pilgrim carries the sunset
Farther and farther down the green mountain

ON HEARING A LUTE PLAYER

Your seven strings are like the voice
Of a cold wind in the pines
Singing old beloved songs
Which no one cares for any more

A FAREWELL TO A BUDDHIST MONK

Can drifting clouds and white storks
Be tenants in this world of ours? —
Or you still live on Wu-chou Mountain
Now that people are coming here?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

CLIMBING IN AUTUMN FOR A VIEW FROM THE TEMPLE ON THE TERRACE OF GENERAL WU

As the seasons have dealt with this ancient terrace,
So autumn breaks my homesick heart
Few pilgrims venture climbing to a temple so wild,
Up from the lake, in the mountain clouds
Sunset clings in the old defences,
A stone gong shivers through the empty woods.
Of the Southern Dynasty, what remains?
Nothing but the great River.

(53)

A FAREWELL TO GOVERNOR LI ON HIS WAY HOME TO HAN-YANG

Sad wanderer, once you conquered the South,
Commanding a hundred thousand men,
Today, dismissed and dispossessed,
In your old age you remember glory
Once, when you stood, three borders were still,
Your dagger was the scale of life
Now, watching the great rivers, the Kiang and the Han,
On their ways in the evening, where do you go?

LIU CHANG CH ING

ON SEEING WANG LEAVE FOR THE SOUTH

Toward a mist upon the water
Still I wave my hand and sob
For the flying bird is lost in space
Beyond a desolate green mountain
But now the long river the far lone sail
The five lakes gleam like spring in the sunset
And down an island white with duckweed
Comes the quiet of communion

WHILE VISITING ON THE SOUTH STREAM
THE TAOIST PRIEST CH ANG

Walking along a little path
I find a footprint on the moss
A white cloud low on the quiet lake
Grasses that sweeten an idle door
A pine grown greener with the rain
A brook that comes from a mountain source—
And mingling with Truth among the flowers
I have forgotten what to say

(75 75a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

NEW YEAR'S AT CH'ANG-SHA

New Year's only deepens my longing,
Adds to the lonely tears of an exile
Who, growing old and still in harness,
Is left here by the homing spring
Monkeys come down from the mountains to haunt me.
I bend like a willow, when it rains on the river
I think of Chia Yi, who taught here and died here —
And I wonder what my term shall be.

(43)

ON LEAVING KIU-KIANG AGAIN

TO HSUEH AND LIU

Dare I, at my age, accept my summons,
Knowing of the world's ways only wine and song?
Over the moon-edged river come wildgeese from the Tartars,
And the thinner the leaves along the Huai, the wider the southern
mountains
I ought to be glad to take my old bones back to the capital,
But what am I good for in that world, with my few white
hairs?
As bent and decrepit as you are, I am ashamed to thank you,
When you caution me that I may encounter thunderbolts

(54)

LIU CHANG CH ING

ON PASSING CHIA YI S HOUSE IN CH ANG SHA

Here where you spent your three years exile
To be mourned in Ch u ten thousand years
Can I trace your footprint in the autumn grass —
Or only slanting sunlight through the bleak woods?
If even good Emperor Wen was cold hearted
Could you hope that the dull river Hsiang would understand you
These desolate waters these taciturn mountains
When you came like me so far away?

(43)

AN EVENING VIEW OF THE CITY OF YO CHOU
AFTER COMING FROM HAN KOU TO
PARROT ISLAND

A POEM SENT TO MY FRIEND GOVERNOR YUAN

No ripples in the river no mist on the islands
Yet the landscape is blurred toward my friend in Ch u
Birds in the slanting sun cross Han kou
And the autumn sky mingles with Lake Tung ting
From a bleak mountain wall the cold tone of a bugle
Reminds me moored by a ruined fort
That Chia Yi s loyal plea to the House of Han
Banned him to Ch ang sha to be an exile

(43)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Liu Chung-yung

庸中柳

A TROOPER'S BURDEN

For years, to guard the Jade Pass and the River of Gold,
With our hands on our horse-whips and our sword-hilts,
We have watched the green graves change to snow
And the Yellow Stream ring the Black Mountain forever

LIU FANG PING

Liu Fang ping

平方劉

A MOONLIGHT NIGHT

When the moon has coloured half the house
With the North Star at its height and the South Star setting
I can feel the first motions of the warm air of spring
In the singing of an insect at my green silk window

SPRING HEART BREAK

With twilight passing her silken window
She weeps alone in her chamber of gold
For spring is departing from a desolate garden
And a drift of pear petals is closing a door

•

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Liu Shên-hsu

虛春劉

A POEM

(Its Title Lost)

On a road outreaching the white clouds,
By a spring outrunning the bluest river,
Petals come drifting on the wind
And the brook is sweet with them all the way.
My quiet gate is a mountain-trail,
And the willow-trees about my cottage
Sift on my sleeve, through the shadowy noon,
Distillations of the sun

LIU TSUNG YUAN

Liu Tsung yuan

元宗柳

RIVER SNOW

A hundred mountains and no bird
A thousand paths without a footprint
A little boat a bamboo cloak
An old man fishing in the cold river snow

FROM THE CITY TOWER OF LIU CHOU

TO MY FOUR FELLOW OFFICIALS

AT CHANG TING FENG AND LIEN DISTRICTS

At this lofty tower where the town ends wilderness begins
And our longing has as far to go as the ocean or the sky
Hibiscus flowers by the moat heave in a sudden wind
And vines along the wall are whipped with slanting rain
Nothing to see for three hundred miles but a blur of woods and
mountain —

And the river's nine loops twisting in our bowels
This is where they have sent us this land of tattooed people —
And not even letters to keep us in touch with home

(55)

READING BUDDHIST CLASSICS WITH CH'AO
AT HIS TEMPLE IN THE EARLY MORNING

I clean my teeth in water drawn from a cold well,
And while I brush my clothes, I purify my mind,
Then, slowly turning pages in the Tree-Leaf Book,
I recite, along the path to the eastern shelter

The world has forgotten the true fountain of this teaching
And people enslave themselves to miracles and fables
Under the given words I want the essential meaning,
I look for the simplest way to sow and reap my nature
Here in the quiet of the priest's temple-courtyard,
Mosses add their climbing colour to the thick bamboo,
And now comes the sun, out of mist and fog,
And pines that seem to be new-bathed,
And everything is gone from me, speech goes, and reading,
Leaving the single unison

DWELLING BY A STREAM

I had so long been troubled by official hat and robe
That I am glad to be an exile here in this wild southland
I am a neighbour now of planters and reapers
I am a guest of the mountains and woods
I plough in the morning, turning dewy grasses,

LIU TSUNG YUAN

And at evening tie my fisher boat breaking the quiet stream
Back and forth I go scarcely meeting anyone
And sing a long poem and gaze at the blue sky

AN OLD FISHERMAN

An old fisherman spent the night here under the western cliff
He dipped up water from the pure Hsiang and made a bamboo
fire
And then at sunrise he went his way through the cloven mist
With only the creak of his paddle left in the greenness of moun-
tain and river
I turn and see the waves moving as from heaven
And clouds above the cliffs coming idly one by one

Liu Yu-hsi

錫禹劉

BLACKTAIL ROW

Grass has run wild now by the Bridge of Red-Birds,
And swallows' wings, at sunset, in Blacktail Row
Where once they visited great homes,
Dip among doorways of the poor

(56)

A SPRING SONG

In gala robes she comes down from her chamber
Into her courtyard, enclosure of spring
When she tries from the centre to count the flowers,
On her hairpin of jade a dragon-fly poises

IN THE TEMPLE OF THE FIRST KING OF SHU

Even in this world the spirit of a hero
Lives and reigns for thousands of years

LIU YU HSI

You were the firmest of the pot's three legs
It was you who maintained the honour of the currency
You chose a great premier to magnify your kingdom
And yet you had a son so little like his father
That girls of your country were taken captive
To dance in the palace of the King of Wei

(49b 49c)

THOUGHTS OF OLD TIME AT WEST FORT
MOUNTAIN

Since Wang Chun brought his towering ships down from Yi-chou
The royal ghost has pined in the city of Nan king
Ten thousand feet of iron chain were sunk here to the bottom —
And then came the flag of surrender on the Wall of Stone
Cycles of change have moved into the past
While still this mountain dignity has commanded the cold river
And now comes the day of the Chinese world united
And the old forts fill with ruin and with autumn reeds

(57)

Lo Ping-wang

平 賓 路

A POLITICAL PRISONER LISTENING TO A CICADA

While the year sinks westward, I hear a cicada
Bid me to be resolute here in my cell,
Yet it needed the song of those black wings
To break a white-haired prisoner's heart . . .
His flight is heavy through the fog,
His pure voice drowns in the windy world.
Who knows if he be singing still? —
Who listens any more to me?

(58, 44)

LU LUN

Lu Lun

綸 虎

BORDER SONGS

(Written to Music)

I

His golden arrow is tipped with hawk's feathers
His embroidered silk flag has a tail like a swallow
One man arising gives a new order
To the answering shout of a thousand tents

II

The woods are black and a wind assails the grasses
Yet the general tries night archery —
And next morning he finds his white plumed arrow
Pointed deep in the hard rock

III

High in the faint moonlight wildgeese are soaring
Tartar chieftains are fleeing through the dark —
And we chase them with horses lightly burdened
And a burden of snow on our bows and our swords

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

IV

Let feasting begin in the wild camp!
Let bugles cry our victory!
Let us drink, let us dance in our golden armour!
Let us thunder on rivers and hills with our drums!

(59)

A FAREWELL TO LI TUAN

By my old gate, among yellow grasses,
Still we linger, sick at heart
The way you must follow through cold clouds
Will lead you this evening into snow
Your father died, you left home young,
Nobody knew of your misfortunes
We cry, we say nothing What can I wish you,
In this blowing wintry world?

A NIGHT-MOORING AT WU-CHANG

Far off in the clouds stand the walls of Han-yang,
Another day's journey for my lone sail
Though a river-merchant ought to sleep in this calm weather,
I listen to the tide at night and voices of the boatmen

LU LUN

My thin hair grows wintry, like the triple Hsiang streams
Three thousand miles my heart goes, homesick with the moon
But the war has left me nothing of my heritage —
And oh, the pang of hearing these drums along the river!

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ma Tai

戴 馬

AN AUTUMN COTTAGE AT PA-SHANG

After the shower at Pa-shang,
I see an evening line of wildgeese,
The limp-hanging leaves of a foreign tree,
A lantern's cold gleam, lonely in the night,
An empty garden, white with dew,
The ruined wall of a neighbouring monastery.
I have taken my ease here long enough
What am I waiting for, I wonder.

THOUGHTS OF OLD TIME ON THE CH'U RIVER

A cold light shines on the gathering dew,
As sunset fades beyond the southern mountains,
Trees echo with monkeys on the banks of Lake Tung-t'ing,
Where somebody is moving in an orchid-wood boat
Marsh-lands are swollen wide with the moon,
While torrepts are bent to the mountains' will,
And the vanished Queens of the Clouds leave me
Sad with autumn all night long.

(60)

Meng Chiao

郊 孟

A SONG OF A PURE HEARTED GIRL
(*Written to Music*)

Lakka trees ripen two by two
And mandarin-ducks die side by side
If a true hearted girl will love only her husband
In a life as faithfully lived as theirs
What troubling wave can arrive to vex
A spirit like water in a timeless well?

A TRAVELLER'S SONG
(*Written to Music*)

The thread in the hands of a fond hearted mother
Makes clothes for the body of her wayward boy
Carefully she sews and thoroughly she mends
Dreading the delays that will keep him late from home
But how much love has the inch long grass
For three spring months of the light of the sun?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Méng Hao-jan

然浩孟

A NIGHT-MOORING ON THE CHIEN-TÊ RIVER

While my little boat moves on its mooring of mist,
And daylight wanes, old memories begin .
How wide the world was, how close the trees to heaven,
And how clear in the water the nearness of the moon!

A SPRING MORNING

I awake light-hearted this morning of spring,
Everywhere round me the singing of birds —
But now I remember the night, the storm,
And I wonder how many blossoms were broken.

MENG HAO-JAN

A MESSAGE FROM LAKE TUNG TING

TO PREMIER CHANG

Here in the Eighth month the waters of the lake
Are of a single air with heaven
And a mist from the Yun and Meng valleys
Has beleaguered the city of Yo-chou
I should like to cross but I can find no boat
 How ashamed I am to be idler than you statesmen
As I sit here and watch a fisherman casting
And empty envy him his catch

ON CLIMBING YEN MOUNTAIN WITH FRIENDS

While worldly matters take their turn
Ancient modern to and fro
Rivers and mountains are changeless in their glory
And still to be witnessed from this trail
 Where a fisher boat dips by a waterfall
Where the air grows colder deep in the valley
The monument of Yang remains
And we have wept reading the words

(61)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

AT A BANQUET

IN THE HOUSE OF THE TAOIST PRIEST MÊI

In my bed among the woods, grieving that spring must end,
I lifted up the curtain on a pathway of flowers,
And a flashing bluebird bade me come
To the dwelling-place of the Red Pine Genie
 What a flame for his golden crucible —
Peach-trees magical with buds! —
And for holding boyhood in his face,
The rosy-flowing wine of clouds!

(62, 62a)

ON RETURNING AT THE YEAR'S END TO CHUNG-NAN MOUNTAIN

I petition no more at the north palace-gate
 To this tumble-down hut on Chung-nan Mountain
I was banished for my blunders, by a wise ruler
I have been sick so long I see none of my friends
My white hairs hasten my decline,
Like pale beams ending the old year.
Therefore I lie awake and ponder
On the pine-shadowed moonlight in my empty window

(32, 32a)

MENG HAO-JAN

STOPPING AT A FRIEND'S FARM HOUSE

Preparing me chicken and rice old friend
You entertain me at your farm
We watch the green trees that circle your village
And the pale blue of outlying mountains
We open your window over garden and field
To talk mulberry and hemp with our cups in our hands
Wait till the Mountain Holiday —
I am coming again in chrysanthemum time

(64)

FROM CH IN COUNTRY
TO THE BUDDHIST PRIEST YUAN

How gladly I would seek a mountain
If I had enough means to live as a recluse!
For I turn at last from serving the State
To the Eastern Woods Temple and to you my master
Like ashes of gold in a cinnamon flame
My youthful desires have been burnt with the years —
And tonight in the chilling sunset wind
A cicada singing weighs on my heart

(63 44)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

FROM A MOORING ON THE T'UNG-LU TO A FRIEND IN YANG-CHOU

With monkeys whimpering on the shadowy mountain,
And the river rushing through the night,
And a wind in the leaves along both banks,
And the moon athwart my solitary sail,
I, a stranger in this inland district,
Homesick for my Yang-chou friends,
Send eastward two long streams of tears
To find the nearest touch of the sea

TAKING LEAVE OF WANG WÊI

Slow and reluctant, I have waited
Day after day, till now I must go
How sweet the road-side flowers might be
If they did not mean good-bye, old friend
The Lords of the Realm are harsh to us
And men of affairs are not our kind
I will turn back home, I will say no more,
I will close the gate of my old garden

MENG HAO-JAN

MEMORIES IN EARLY WINTER

South go the wildgeese for leaves are now falling
And the water is cold with a wind from the north
I remember my home but the Hsiang River's curves
Are walled by the clouds of this southern country
I go forward I weep till my tears are spent
I see a sail in the far sky
Where is the ferry? Will somebody tell me?
It's growing rough It's growing dark

ON CLIMBING ORCHID MOUNTAIN IN THE AUTUMN

To CHIANG

On a northern peak among white clouds
You have found your hermitage of peace
And now as I climb this mountain to see you
High with the wildgeese flies my heart
The quiet dusk might seem a little sad
If this autumn weather were not so brisk and clear
I look down at the river bank with homeward bound villagers
Resting on the sand till the ferry returns
There are trees at the horizon like a row of grasses
And against the river's rim an island like the moon
I hope that you will come and meet me bringing a basket of
wine —
And we'll celebrate together the Mountain Holiday

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

IN SUMMER AT THE SOUTH PAVILION

THINKING OF HSING

The mountain-light suddenly fails in the west,
In the east from the lake the slow moon rises
I loosen my hair to enjoy the evening coolness
And open my window and lie down in peace
The wind brings me odours of lotuses,
And bamboo-leaves drip with a music of dew . . .
I would take up my lute and I would play,
But, alas, who here would understand?
And so I think of you, old friend,
O troubler of my midnight dreams!

AT THE MOUNTAIN-LODGE

OF THE BUDDHIST PRIEST YE

WAITING IN VAIN FOR MY FRIEND TING

Now that the sun has set beyond the western range,
Valley after valley is shadowy and dim
And now through pine-trees come the moon and the chill of
evening,
And my ears feel pure with the sound of wind and water
Nearly all the woodsmen have reached home,
Birds have settled on their perches in the quiet mist . . .

MENG HAO-JAN

And still — because you promised — I am waiting for you wait
ing

Playing my lonely lute under a wayside vine

RETURNING AT NIGHT TO LU MEN MOUNTAIN

A bell in the mountain temple sounds the coming of night
I hear people at the fishing town stumble aboard the ferry
While others follow the sand bank to their homes along the river

I also take a boat and am bound for Lu men Mountain —
And soon the Lu men moonlight is piercing misty trees
I have come before I know it upon an ancient hermitage
The thatch door the piney path the solitude the quiet
Where a hermit lives and moves never needing a companion

(65)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

One at the Western Front

人鄙四

GENERAL KÊ-SHU

This constellation, with its seven high stars,
Is Kê-shu lifting his sword in the night
And no more barbarians, nor their horses, nor cattle,
Dare ford the river boundary

P A I T I

P ai T i

迪 裴

A FAREWELL TO TS UEI

Though you think to return to this maze of mountains
Oh let them brim your heart with wonder!
Remember the fisherman from Wu ling
Who had only a day in the Peach Blossom Country

(2)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Po Chu-yi

易居白

A SUGGESTION TO MY FRIEND LIU

There's a gleam of green in an old bottle,
There's a stir of red in the quiet stove,
There's a feeling of snow in the dusk outside —
What about a cup of wine inside?

A SONG OF THE PALACE

Her tears are spent, but no dreams come
She can hear the others singing through the night
She has lost his love Alone with her beauty,
She leans till dawn on her incense-pillow

GRASSES

Boundless grasses over the plain
 Come and go with every season
 Wildfire never quite consumes them —
 They are tall once more in the spring wind
 Sweet they press on the old high road
 And reach the crumbling city gate
 O Prince of Friends you are gone again
 I hear them sighing after you

(68)

TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
 ADRIFT IN TROUBLED TIMES
 THIS POEM OF THE MOON

(Since the disorders in Ho nan and the famine in Kuan nei my brothers and sisters have been scattered Looking at the moon I express my thoughts in this poem which I send to my eldest brother at Fou liang my seventh brother at Yu chien my fifteenth brother at Wu-chiang and my younger brothers and sisters at Fu li and Hsia kuei)

My heritage lost through disorder and famine
 My brothers and sisters flung eastward and westward
 My fields and gardens wrecked by the war

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

My own flesh and blood become scum of the street,
I moan to my shadow like a lone-wandering wildgoose,
I am torn from my root like a water-plant in autumn
I gaze at the moon, and my tears run down
For hearts, in five places, all sick with one wish

(69)

A SONG OF UNENDING SORROW

China's Emperor, craving beauty that might shake an empire,
Was on the throne for many years, searching, never finding,
Till a little child of the Yang clan, hardly even grown,
Bred in an inner chamber, with no one knowing her,
But with graces granted by heaven and not to be concealed,
At last one day was chosen for the imperial household
If she but turned her head and smiled, there were cast a hundred
 spells,
And the powder and paint of the Six Palaces faded into nothing
 It was early spring They bathed her in the Flower-Pure Pool,
Which warmed and smoothed the creamy-tinted crystal of her skin,
And, because of her languor, a maid was lifting her
When first the Emperor noticed her and chose her for his bride
The cloud of her hair, petal of her cheek, gold ripples of her crown
 when she moved,
Were sheltered on spring evenings by warm hibiscus-curtains,
But nights of spring were short and the sun arose too soon,
And the Emperor, from that time forth, forsook his early hearings

And lavished all his time on her with feasts and revelry
 His mistress of the spring his despot of the night
 There were other ladies in his court three thousand of rare beauty
 But his favours to three thousand were concentrated in one body
 By the time she was dressed in her Golden Chamber it would
 be almost evening
 And when tables were cleared in the Tower of Jade she would
 loiter slow with wine
 Her sisters and her brothers all were given titles
 And because she so illumined and glorified her clan
 She brought to every father every mother through the empire
 Happiness when a girl was born rather than a boy
 High rose Li Palace entering blue clouds
 And far and wide the breezes carried magical notes
 Of soft song and slow dance of string and bamboo music
 The Emperor's eyes could never gaze on her enough —
 Till war drums booming from Yu yang shocked the whole earth
 And broke the tunes of *The Rainbow Skirt and the Feathered*
 Coat
 The Forbidden City the nine tiered palace loomed in the dust
 From thousands of horses and chariots headed southwest
 The imperial flag opened the way now moving and now
 pausing —
 But thirty miles from the capital beyond the western gate
 The men of the army stopped not one of them would stir
 Till under their horses hoofs they might trample those moth
 eyebrows
 Flowery hairpins fell to the ground no one picked them up
 And a green and white jade hair tassel and a yellow gold hair bird

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

The Emperor could not save her, he could only cover his face
And later when he turned to look, the place of blood and tears
Was hidden in a yellow dust blown by a cold wind.

. . . At the cleft of the Dagger-Tower Trail they criss-crossed
through a cloud-line

Under O-mêi Mountain The last few came
Flags and banners lost their colour in the fading sunlight
But as waters of Shu are always green and its mountains always
blue,

So changeless was His Majesty's love and deeper than the days
He stared at the desolate moon from his temporary palace
He heard bell-notes in the evening rain, cutting at his breast
And when heaven and earth resumed their round and the dragon-
car faced home,

The Emperor clung to the spot and would not turn away
From the soil along the Ma-wêi slope, under which was buried
That memory, that anguish Where was her jade-white face?
Ruler and lords, when eyes would meet, wept upon their coats
As they rode, with loose rein, slowly eastward, back to the capital
. . . The pools, the gardens, the palace, all were just as before,
The Lake T'ai-yi hibiscus, the Wêi-yang Palace willows,

But a petal was like her face and a willow-leaf her eyebrow —
And what could he do but cry whenever he looked at them?
. . . Peach-trees and plum-trees blossomed, in the winds of spring,
Lakka-foliage fell to the ground, after autumn rains;
The Western and Southern Palaces were littered with late grasses,
And the steps were mounded with red leaves that no one swept
away

Her Pear-Garden Players became white-haired

And the eunuchs thin-eyebrowed in her Court of Pepper Trees
 Over the throne flew fire flies while he brooded in the twilight
 He would lengthen the lamp-wick to its end and still could never
 sleep

Bell and drum would slowly toll the dragging night hours
 And the River of Stars grow sharp in the sky just before dawn
 And the porcelain mandarin-ducks on the roof grow thick with
 morning frost

And his covers of kingfisher blue feel lonelier and colder
 With the distance between life and death year after year
 And yet no beloved spirit ever visited his dreams

At Ling-chun lived a Taoist priest who was a guest of
 heaven

Able to summon spirits by his concentrated mind
 And people were so moved by the Emperor's constant brooding
 That they besought the Taoist priest to see if he could find her
 He opened his way in space and clove the ether like lightning
 Up to heaven under the earth looking everywhere
 Above he searched the Green Void below the Yellow Spring
 But he failed in either place to find the one he looked for
 And then he heard accounts of an enchanted isle at sea
 A part of the intangible and incorporeal world
 With pavilions and fine towers in the five-coloured air
 And of exquisite immortals moving to and fro
 And of one among them — whom they called The Ever True —
 With a face of snow and flowers resembling hers he sought
 So he went to the West Hall's gate of gold and knocked at the
 jasper door

And asked a girl called Morsel-of-Jade to tell The Doubly Perfect

And the lady, at news of an envoy from the Emperor of China,
 Was startled out of dreams in her nine-flowered canopy
 She pushed aside her pillow, dressed, shook away sleep,
 And opened the pearly shade and then the silver screen
 Her cloudy hair-dress hung on one side because of her great haste,
 And her flower-cap was loose when she came along the terrace,
 While a light wind filled her cloak and fluttered with her motion
 As though she danced *The Rainbow Skirt and the Feathered
 Coat*

And the tear-drops drifting down her sad white face
 Were like a rain in spring on the blossom of the pear
 But love glowed deep within her eyes when she bade him thank
 her liege,

Whose form and voice had been strange to her ever since their
 parting —

Since happiness had ended at the Court of the Bright Sun,
 And moons and dawns had become long in Fairy-Mountain
 Palace

But when she turned her face and looked down toward the earth
 And tried to see the capital, there were only fog and dust
 So she took out, with emotion, the pledges he had given
 And, through his envoy, sent him back a shell box and gold
 hairpin,

But kept one branch of the hairpin and one side of the box,
 Breaking the gold of the hairpin, breaking the shell of the box,
 "Our souls belong together," she said, "like this gold and this
 shell —

Somewhere, sometime, on earth or in heaven, we shall surely
 meet "

And she sent him by his messenger a sentence reminding him
Of vows which had been known only to their two hearts

On the seventh day of the Seventh month in the Palace of Long
Life

We told each other secretly in the quiet midnight world
That we wished to fly in heaven two birds with the wings of one
And to grow together on the earth two branches of one tree

Earth endures heaven endures some time both shall end
While this unending sorrow goes on and on for ever

(4a 4b 70)

THE SONG OF A GUITAR

(In the tenth year of Yuan ho I was banished and demoted to be assistant official in Kiu kiang In the summer of the next year I was seeing a friend leave Pen pu and heard in the midnight from a neighbouring boat a guitar played in the manner of the capital Upon inquiry I found that the player had formerly been a dancing girl there and in her maturity had been married to a merchant I invited her to my boat to have her play for us She told me her story heyday and then unhappiness Since my departure from the capital I had not felt sad but that night after I left her I began to realize my banishment And I wrote this long poem — six hundred and twelve characters)

I was bidding a guest farewell at night on the Hsun yang River
Where maple leaves and full grown rushes rustled in the autumn

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

I, the host, had dismounted, my guest had boarded his boat,
And we raised our cups and wished to drink — but, alas, there
was no music

For all we had drunk we felt no joy and were parting from each
other,

When the river widened mysteriously toward the full moon —
We had heard a sudden sound, a guitar across the water.

Host forgot to turn back home, and guest to go his way.

We followed where the melody led and asked the player's name
The sound broke off . . . then reluctantly she answered.

We moved our boat near hers, invited her to join us,
Summoned more wine and lanterns to recommence our banquet
Yet we called and urged a thousand times before she started
toward us,

Still hiding half her face from us behind her guitar
. . . She turned the tuning-pegs and tested several strings,
We could feel what she was feeling, even before she played
Each string a meditation, each note a deep thought,
As if she were telling us the ache of her whole life
She knit her brows, flexed her fingers, then began her music,
Little by little letting her heart share everything with ours
She brushed the strings, twisted them slow, swept them, plucked
them —

First the air of *The Rainbow Skirt*, then *The Six Little Ones*
The large strings hummed like rain,
The small strings whispered like a secret,
Hummed, whispered — and then were intermingled
Like a pouring of large and small pearls into a plate of jade
We heard an oriole, liquid, hidden among flowers

We heard a brook bitterly sob along a bank of sand
 By the checking of its cold touch the very string seemed broken
 As though it could not pass and the notes dying away
 Into a depth of sorrow and concealment of lament
 Told even more in silence than they had told in sound
 A silver vase abruptly broke with a gush of water
 And out leapt armoured horses and weapons that clashed and
 smote —

And before she laid her pick down she ended with one stroke
 And all four strings made one sound as of rending silk
 There was quiet in the east boat and quiet in the west
 And we saw the white autumnal moon enter the river's heart

When she had slowly placed the pick back among the strings
 She rose and smoothed her clothing and formal courteous
 Told us how she had spent her girlhood at the capital
 Living in her parents' house under the Mount of Toads
 And had mastered the guitar at the age of thirteen
 With her name recorded first in the class roll of musicians
 Her art the admiration even of experts
 Her beauty the envy of all the leading dancers
 How noble youths of Wu ling had lavishly competed
 And numberless red rolls of silk been given for one song
 And silver combs with shell inlay been snapped by her rhythms
 And skirts the colour of blood been spoiled with stains of wine
 Season after season joy had followed joy
 Autumn moons and spring winds had passed without her heeding
 Till first her brother left for the war and then her aunt died
 And evenings went and evenings came and her beauty faded —
 With ever fewer chariots and horses at her door

THE JADI MOUNTAIN

So that finally she gave herself as wife to a merchant
Who, prizing money first, careless how he left her,
Had gone, a month before, to Fou-liang to buy tea
And she had been tending an empty boat at the river's mouth,
No company but the bright moon and the cold water
And sometimes in the deep of night she would dream of her
triumphs

And be wakened from her dreams by the scalding of her tears

Her very first guitar-note had started me sighing,
Now, having heard her story, I was sadder still
"We are both unhappy — to the sky's end
We meet We understand What does acquaintance matter?
I came, a year ago, away from the capital
And am now a sick exile here in Kiu-kiang —
And so remote is Kiu-kiang that I have heard no music,
Neither string nor bamboo, for a whole year
My quarters, near the River Town, are low and damp,
With bitter reeds and yellowed rushes all about the house.
And what is to be heard here, morning and evening? —
The bleeding cry of cuckoos, the whimpering of apes
On flowery spring mornings and moonlit autumn nights
I have often taken wine up and drunk it all alone,
Of course there are the mountain songs and the village pipes,
But they are crude and strident, and grate on my ears
And tonight, when I heard you playing your guitar, •
I felt as if my hearing were bright with fairy-music
Do not leave us Come, sit down Play for us again
And I will write you a ballad to the tune you have just sung "

Moved by what I said, she stood there for a moment,

PO CHU YI

Then sat again to her strings — and they sounded even sadder
Although the tunes were different from those she had played
before

The feasters all listening covered their faces
But who of them all was crying the most?
This Liu kiang official My blue sleeve was wet

(71)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Séng Chiao-jan

然皎僧

NOT FINDING LU HUNG-CHIEN AT HOME

To find you, moved beyond the city,
A wide path led me, by mulberry and hemp,
To a new-set hedge of chrysanthemums —
Not yet blooming although autumn had come
 I knocked, no answer, not even a dog
I waited to ask your western neighbour,
But he told me that daily you climb the mountain,
Never returning until sunset

(72)

Shen Chuan-chi

期 伶 沈

LINES

Against the City of the Yellow Dragon
 Our troops were sent long years ago
 And girls here watch the same melancholy moon
 That lights our Chinese warriors —
 And young wives dream a dream of spring
 That last night their heroic husbands
 In a great attack with flags and drums
 Captured the City of the Yellow Dragon

BEYOND SEEING

(Written to Music)

A girl of the Lu clan who lives in Golden Wood Hall
 Where swallows perch in pairs on beams of tortoise shell
 Hears the washing mallets cold beat shake the leaves down
 The Liao-yang expedition will be gone ten years
 And messages are lost in the White Wolf River
 Here in the City of the Red Phoenix autumn nights are long
 Where one who is heart sick to see beyond seeing
 Sees only moonlight on the yellow silk wave of her loom

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ssü-k'ung Shu

曙空司

A FAREWELL TO HAN SHEN
AT THE YUN-YANG INN

Long divided by river and sea,
For years we two have failed to meet
And suddenly to find you seems like a dream . . .
With a catch in the throat, we ask how old we are
 Our single lamp shines, through cold and wet,
On a bamboo-thicket sheathed in rain,
But forgetting the sadness that will come with tomorrow,
Let us share the comfort of this farewell wine

WHEN LU LUN MY COUSIN
COMES FOR THE NIGHT

With no other neighbour but the quiet night,
Here I live in the same old cottage,
And as raindrops brighten yellow leaves,
The lamp illumines my white head
Out of the world these many years,
I am ashamed to receive you here
But you cannot come too often,
More than brother, lifelong friend

SSŪ K UNG SHU

TO A FRIEND BOUND NORTH
AFTER THE REBELLION

In dangerous times we two came south
Now you go north in safety without me
But remember my head growing white among strangers
When you look on the blue of the mountains of home
 The moon goes down behind a ruined fort
Leaving star-clusters above an old gate
There are shivering birds and withering grasses,
Whichever way I turn my face

•

Sung Chih-wên

問之宋

INSCRIBED ON THE WALL OF AN INN
NORTH OF TA-YU MOUNTAIN

They say that wildgeese, flying southward,
Here turn back, this very month .
Shall my own southward journey
Ever be retraced, I wonder?
. The river is pausing at ebb-tide,
And the woods are thick with clinging mist —
But tomorrow morning, over the mountain,
Dawn will be white with the plum-trees of home

(73)

Tai Shu lun

倫叔玳

CHANCING ON OLD FRIENDS IN A VILLAGE INN

While the autumn moon is pouring full
On a thousand night levels among towns and villages
There meet by chance south of the river
Dreaming doubters of a dream
In the trees a wind has startled the birds
And insects cower from cold in the grass
But wayfarers at least have wine
And nothing to fear — till the morning bell

(74)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ts'ên Ts'an

參 岑

ON MEETING A MESSENGER TO THE CAPITAL

It's a long way home, a long way east
I am old and my sleeve is wet with tears
We meet on horseback I have no means of writing
Tell them three words "He is safe"

A MESSAGE TO CENSOR TU FU
AT HIS OFFICE IN THE LEFT COURT

Together we officials climbed vermilion steps,
To be parted by the purple walls
Our procession, which entered the palace at dawn,
Leaves fragrant now at dusk with imperial incense
 Grey heads may grieve for a fallen flower,
Or blue clouds envy a lilting bird,
But this reign is of heaven, nothing goes wrong, 't
There have been almost no petitions

AN EARLY AUDIENCE AT THE PALACE OF LIGHT

HARMONIZING SECRETARY CHIA CHIH'S POEM

Cock-crow the Purple Road cold in the dawn
 Linnet songs court roofs tinted with April
 At the Golden Gate morning bell countless doors open
 And up the jade steps float a thousand officials
 With flowery scabbards Stars have gone down
 Willows are brushing the dew from the flags —
 And alone on the Lake of the Phoenix a guest
 Is chanting too well *The Song of Bright Spring*

(9 9a)

ASCENDING THE PAGODA
 AT THE TEMPLE OF KIND FAVOUR
 WITH KAO SHIH AND HSUEH CHU

The pagoda rising abruptly from earth
 Reaches to the very Palace of Heaven
 Climbing we seem to have left the world behind us
 With the steps we look down on hung from space
 It overtops a holy land
 And can only have been built by toil of the spirit
 Its four sides darken the bright sun
 Its seven stories cut the grey clouds
 Birds fly down beyond our sight

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And the rapid wind below our hearing;
Mountain-ranges, toward the east,
Appear to be curving and flowing like rivers,
Far green locust-trees line broad roads
Toward clustered palaces and mansions,
Colours of autumn, out of the west,
Enter advancing through the city,
And northward there lie, in five graveyards,
Calm forever under dewy green grass,
Those who know life's final meaning
Which all humankind must learn
 . Henceforth I put my official hat aside.
To find the Eternal Way is the only happiness.

(75)

A SONG OF RUNNING-HORSE RIVER

IN FAREWELL TO GENERAL FÊNG OF THE WESTERN EXPEDITION

Look how swift to the snowy sea races Running-Horse River! —
And sand, up from the desert, flies yellow into heaven
This Ninth-month night is blowing cold at Wheel Tower,
And valleys, like peck measures, fill with the broken boulders
That downward, headlong, follow the wind

 In spite of grey grasses, Tartar horses are plump,
West of the Hill of Gold, smoke and dust gather
O General of the Chinese troops, start your campaign!
Keep your iron armour on all night long,

Send your soldiers forward with a clattering of weapons!

While the sharp wind's point cuts the face like a knife
 And snowy sweat steams on the horses' backs
 Freezing a pattern of five flower coins,
 Your challenge from camp from an inkstand of ice,
 Has chilled the barbarian chieftain's heart
 You will have no more need of an actual battle! —
 We await the news of victory here at the western pass!

A SONG OF WHEEL TOWER

IN FAREWELL TO GENERAL FÊNG OF THE WESTERN EXPEDITION

On Wheel Tower parapets night bugles are blowing
 Though the flag at the northern end hangs limp
 Scouts in the darkness are passing Chuli
 Where west of the Hill of Gold the Tartar chieftain has
 halted
 We can see from the look-out the dust and black smoke
 Where Chinese troops are camping north of Wheel Tower
 Our flags now beckon the General farther west —
 With bugles in the dawn he rouses his Grand Army
Drums like a tempest pound on four sides
 And the Yin Mountains shake with the shouts of ten thousand
 Clouds and the war wind whirl up in a point
 Over fields where grass roots will tighten around white bones
 In the Dagger River mist through a biting wind
 Horseshoes at the Sand Mouth line break on icy boulders

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Our General endures every pain, every hardship,
Commanded to settle the dust along the border
We have read, in the Green Books, tales of old days—
But here we behold a living man, mightier than the dead.

(76)

A SONG OF WHITE SNOW

IN FAREWELL TO FIELD-CLERK WU GOING HOME

The north wind rolls the white grasses and breaks them;
And the Eighth-month snow across the Tartar sky
Is like a spring gale, come up in the night,
Blowing open the petals of ten thousand pear-trees
It enters the pearl blinds, it wets the silk curtains,
A fur coat feels cold, a cotton mat flimsy,
Bows become rigid, can hardly be drawn
And the metal of armour congeals on the men,
The sand-sea deepens with fathomless ice,
And darkness masses its endless clouds,
But we drink to our guest bound home from camp,
And play him barbarian lutes, guitars, harps,
Till at dusk, when the drifts are crushing our tents
And our frozen red flags cannot flutter in the wind,
We watch him through Wheel-Tower Gate going eastward
Into the snow-mounds of Heaven-Peak Road
And then he disappears at the turn of the pass,
Leaving behind him only hoof-prints

TSU YUNG

Tsu Yung

詠 祖

ON SEEING THE SNOW-PEAK OF CHUNG NAN

See how Chung nan Mountain soars
With its white top over floating clouds —
And a warm sky opening at the snow line
While the town in the valley grows colder and colder

(32)

LOOKING TOWARD AN INNER GATE
OF THE GREAT WALL

My heart sank when I headed north from Yen Country
To the camps of China echoing with bugle and drum
In an endless cold light of massive snow
Tall flags on three borders rise up like a dawn
War torches invade the barbarian moonlight
Mountain clouds like chairmen bear the Great Wall from the sea
Though no youthful clerk meant to be a great general I
throw aside my writing brush —
Like the student who tossed off cap for a lariat I challenge what
may come

(77)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ts'uei Hao

灝 崔

A SONG OF CH'ANG-KAN

(Written to Music)

I

"Tell me, where do you live? —
Near here, by the fishing-pool?
Let's hold our boats together, let's see
If we belong in the same town "

II

"Yes, I live here, by the river,
I have sailed on it many and many a time
Both of us born in Ch'ang-kan, you and I!
Why haven't we always known each other? "

THE YELLOW CRANE TERRACE

Where long ago a yellow crane bore a sage to heaven,
Nothing is left now but the Yellow Crane Terrace
The yellow crane never revisited earth,

TS'UEI HAO

And white clouds are flying without him for ever
Every tree in Han yang becomes clear in the water
And Parrot Island is a nest of sweet grasses
But I look toward home and twilight grows dark
With a mist of grief on the river waves

(282)

PASSING THROUGH HUA YIN

Lords of the capital sharp unearthly
The Great Flower's three points pierce through heaven
Clouds are parting above the Temple of the Warring Emperor
Rain dries on the mountain on the Giant's Palm
Ranges and rivers are the strength of this western gate
Whence roads and trails lead downward into China
O pilgrim of fame O seeker of profit
Why not remain here and lengthen your days?

(14)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Ts'uei Shu

曙 崔

A CLIMB ON THE MOUNTAIN HOLIDAY
TO THE TERRACE WHENCE ONE SEES
THE MAGICIAN

A POEM SENT TO VICE-PREFECT LIU

The Han Emperor Wên bequeathed us this terrace
Which I climb to watch the coming dawn
Cloudy peaks run northward in the three Chin districts,
And rains are blowing westward through the two Ling valleys.
. Who knows but me about the Guard at the Gate,
Or where the Magician of the River Bank is,
Or how to find that magistrate, that poet,
Who was as fond as I am of chrysanthemums and winecups?

(64, 43, 75a, 78, 2a)

Ts uci Tu

金 崔

ON NEW YEAR S EVE

Farther and farther from the three Pa Roads
 I have come three thousand miles anxious and watchful
 Through pale snow patches in the jagged night mountains —
 A stranger with a lonely lantern shaken in the wind
 Separation from my kin
 Binds me closer to my servants —
 Yet how I dread so far adrift
 New Year s Day tomorrow morning!

A SOLITARY WILDGOOSE

Line after line has flown back over the border
 Where are you headed all by yourself?
 In the evening rain you call to them —
 • And slowly you alight on an icy pond
 The low wet clouds move faster than you
 Along the wall toward the cold moon
 If they caught you in a net or with a shot
 Would it be worse than flying alone?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Tu Ch'iu-mang

杜秋娘

THE GOLD-THREADED ROBE

(Written to Music)

Covet not a gold-threaded robe,
Cherish only your young days!
If a bud open, gather it —
Lest you but wait for an empty bough

TU FU

Tu Fu

甫 杜

THE EIGHT SIDED FORTRESS

The Three Kingdoms divided have been bound by his greatness
The Eight-Sided Fortress is founded on his fame
Beside the changing river it stands stony as his grief
That he never conquered the Kingdom of Wu

(492 52a)

ON MEETING LI KUÊI NIEN DOWN THE RIVER

I met you often when you were visiting princes
And when you were playing in noblemen's halls
 Spring passes Far down the river now
I find you alone under falling petals

(80 4b)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

ON A MOONLIGHT NIGHT

Far off in Fu-chou she is watching the moonlight,
Watching it alone from the window of her chamber —
For our boy and girl, poor little babes,
Are too young to know where the Capital is
Her cloudy hair is sweet with mist,
Her jade-white shoulder is cold in the moon.
. When shall we lie again, with no more tears,
Watching this bright light on our screen?

A SPRING VIEW

Though a country be sundered, hills and rivers endure,
And spring comes green again to trees and grasses
Where petals have been shed like tears
And lonely birds have sung their grief
 After the war-fires of three months,
One message from home is worth a ton of gold
. I stroke my white hair It has grown too thin
To hold the hairpins any more

A NIGHT VIGIL
IN THE LEFT COURT OF THE PALACE

Flowers are shadowed the palace darkens
 Birds twitter by for a place to perch
 Heaven's ten thousand windows are twinkling
 And nine cloud terraces are gleaming in the moonlight
 While I wait for the golden lock to turn
 I hear jade pendants tinkling in the wind
 I have a petition to present in the morning
 All night I ask what time it is

TAKING LEAVE OF FRIENDS
ON MY WAY TO HUA CHOU

(In the second year of Chih te I escaped from the capital through the Gate of Golden Light and went to Feng hsiang. In the first year of Chien yuan I was appointed as official to Hua-chou from my former post of Censor. Friends and relatives gathered and saw me leave by the same gate. And I wrote this poem.)

This is the road by which I fled
 When the rebels had reached the west end of the city
 And terror ever since has clutched at my vitals
 Lest some of my soul should never return
 The court has come back now filling the capital

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

But the Emperor sends me away again.
Useless and old, I rein in my horse
For one last look at the thousand gates.

(4d)

REMEMBERING MY BROTHERS
ON A MOONLIGHT NIGHT

A wanderer hears drums portending battle
By the first call of autumn from a wildgoose at the border,
He knows that the dews tonight will be frost
. How much brighter the moonlight is at home!
O my brothers, lost and scattered,
What is life to me without you?
Yet if missives in time of peace go wrong —
What can I hope for during war?

TO LI PO AT THE SKY'S END

A cold wind blows from the far sky .
What are you thinking of, old friend?
The wildgeese never answer me
Rivers and lakes are flooded with rain
. A poet should beware of prosperity,
Yet demons can haunt a wanderer
Ask an unhappy ghost, throw poems to him
Where he drowned himself in the Mi-lo River

(81)

A FAREWELL AT FENG CHI STATION
TO GENERAL YEN

This is where your comrade must leave you
Turning at the foot of these purple mountains
When shall we lift our cups again I wonder
As we did last night and walk in the moon?
The region is murmuring farewell
To one who was honoured through three reigns
And back I go now to my river village
Into the final solitude

ON LEAVING THE TOMB OF PREMIER FANG

Having to travel back now from this far place
I dismount beside your lonely tomb
The ground where I stand is wet with my tears
The sky is dark with broken clouds
I who played chess with the great Premier
Am bringing to my lord the dagger he desired
But I find only petals falling down
I hear only linnets answering

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A NIGHT ABROAD

A light wind is rippling at the grassy shore .
Through the night, to my motionless tall mast,
The stars lean down from open space,
And the moon comes running up the river
. If only my art might bring me fame
And free my sick old age from office! —
Flitting, flitting, what am I like
But a sand-snipe in the wide, wide world!

ON THE GATE-TOWER AT YO-CHOU

I had always heard of Lake Tung-t'ing —
And now at last I have climbed to this tower
With Wu country to the east of me and Ch'u to the south,
I can see heaven and earth endlessly floating
. . But no word has reached me from kin or friends
I am old and sick and alone with my boat
North of this wall there are wars and mountains —
And here by the rail how can I help crying?

THE TEMPLE OF THE PREMIER OF SHU

Where is the temple of the famous Premier? —
 In a deep pine grove near the City of Silk
 With the green grass of spring colouring the steps
 And birds chirping happily under the leaves

The third summons weighted him with affairs of state
 And to two generations he gave his true heart
 But before he could conquer he was dead
 And heroes have wept on their coats ever since

(49b)

A HEARTY WELCOME

TO VICE PREFECT TS UÊI

North of me south of me spring is in flood
 Day after day I have seen only gulls
 My path is full of petals — I have swept it for no others
 My thatch gate has been closed — but opens now for you
 It's a long way to the market I can offer you little —
 Yet here in my cottage there is old wine for our cups
 Shall we summon my elderly neighbour to join us
 Call him through the fence and pour the jar dry?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A VIEW OF THE WILDLRNESS

Snow is white on the westward mountains and on three fortified towns,
And waters in this southern lake flash on a long bridge
But wind and dust from sea to sea bar me from my brothers,
And I cannot help crying, I am so far away
I have nothing to expect now but the ills of old age
I am of less use to my country than a grain of dust
I ride out to the edge of town I watch on the horizon,
Day after day, the chaos of the world

BOTH SIDES OF THE YELLOW RIVER RECAPTURED BY THE IMPERIAL ARMY

News at this far western station! The north has been recaptured!
At first I cannot check the tears from pouring on my coat —
Where is my wife? Where are my sons?
Yet crazily sure of finding them, I pack my books and poems —
And loud my song and deep my drink
On the green spring-day that starts me home,
Back from this mountain, past another mountain,
Up from the south, north again — to my own town!

(83)

TU FU

A LONG CLIMB

In a sharp gale from the wide sky apes are whimpering
Birds are flying homeward over the clear lake and white sand
Leaves are dropping down like the spray of a waterfall
While I watch the long river always rolling on
I have come three thousand miles away Sad now with autumn
And with my hundred years of woe I climb this height alone
Ill fortune has laid a bitter frost on my temples
Heart ache and weariness are a thick dust in my wine

FROM AN UPPER STORY

Flowers as high as my window hurt the heart of a wanderer
For I see from this high vantage sadness everywhere
The Silken River bright with spring floats between earth and
heaven
Like a line of cloud by the Jade Peak between ancient days and
now
Though the State is established for a while as firm as the
North Star
And bandits dare not venture from the western hills
Yet sorry in the twilight for the woes of a long vanished Emperor
I am singing the song his Premier sang when still, unestranged
from the mountain

(49c)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

STAYING AT THE GENERAL'S HEADQUARTERS

The autumn night is clear and cold in the lakka-trees of this
courtyard

I am lying forlorn in the river-town I watch my guttering candle

I hear the lonely notes of a bugle sounding through the dark

The moon is in mid-heaven, but there's no one to share it with me

My messengers are scattered by whirls of rain and sand.

City-gates are closed to a traveller, mountains are walls in my
way —

Yet, I who have borne ten years of pitiable existence,

Find here a perch, a little branch, and am safe for this one night

NIGHT IN THE WATCH-TOWER

While winter daylight shortens in the elemental scale

And snow and frost whiten the cold-circling night,

Stark sounds the fifth-watch with a challenge of drum and bugle

The stars and the River of Heaven pulse over the three moun-
tains,

I hear women in the distance, wailing after the battle,

I see barbarian fishermen and woodcutters in the dawn

Sleeping-Dragon, Plunging-Horse, are no generals now, they
are dust —

Hush for a moment, O tumult of the world.

(84, 49d)

THOUGHTS OF OLD TIME

I

Ten thousand ranges and valleys approach the Ching Gate
 And the village in which the Lady of Light was born and bred
 She went out from the purple palace into the desert land
 She has now become a green grave in the yellow dusk
 Her face! — Can you picture a wind of the spring?
 Her spirit by moonlight returns with a tinkling
 Song of the Tartars on her jade guitar
 Telling her eternal sorrow

(25a)

II

Chu ke's prestige transcends the earth
 There is only reverence for his face
 Yet his will among the Three Kingdoms at war
 Was only as one feather against a flaming sky
 He was brother of men like Yi and Lu
 And in time would have surpassed the greatest of all statesmen
 Though he knew there was no hope for the House of Han
 Yet he wielded his mind for it yielded his life

(49 49b-49c 85)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A VIEW OF T'AI-SHAN

What shall I say of the Great Peak? —
The ancient dukedoms are everywhere green,
Inspired and stirred by the breath of creation,
With the Twin Forces balancing day and night
 I bare my breast toward opening clouds,
I strain my sight after birds flying home
When shall I reach the top and hold
All mountains in a single glance?

(14, 19)

TO MY RETIRED FRIEND WÊI

It is almost as hard for friends to meet
As for the morning and evening stars
Tonight then is a rare event,
Joining, in the candlelight,
Two men who were young not long ago
But now are turning grey at the temples
 To find that half our friends are dead
Shocks us, burns our hearts with grief
We little guessed it would be twenty years
Before I could visit you again
When I went away, you were still unmarried,
But now these boys and girls in a row

Are very kind to their father's old friend
 They ask me where I have been on my journey
 And then when we have talked awhile
 They bring and show me wines and dishes
 Spring chives cut in the night rain
 And brown rice cooked freshly a special way
 My host proclaims it a festival
 He urges me to drink ten cups —
 But what ten cups could make me as drunk
 As I always am with your love in my heart?
 Tomorrow the mountains will separate us
 After tomorrow — who can say?

ALONE IN HER BEAUTY

Who is lovelier than she?
 Yet she lives alone in an empty valley
 She tells me she came from a good family
 Which is humbled now into the dust
 When trouble arose in the Kuan district
 Her brothers and close kin were killed
 What use were their high offices
 Not even shielding their own lives? —
 The world has but scorn for adversity
 Hope goes out like the light of a candle
 Her husband with a vagrant heart
 Seeks a new face like a new piece of jade
 And when morning glories furl at night

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And mandarin-ducks lie side by side,
All he can see is the smile of the new love,
While the old love weeps unheard
The brook was pure in its mountain source,
But away from the mountain its waters darken
 Waiting for her maid to come from selling pearls
For straw to cover the roof again,
She picks a few flowers, no longer for her hair,
And lets pine-needles fall through her fingers,
And, forgetting her thin silk sleeve and the cold,
She leans in the sunset by a tall bamboo

SEEING LI PO IN A DREAM

I

There are sobs when death is the cause of parting,
But life has its partings again and again
 From the poisonous damps of the southern river
You had sent me not one sign from your exile —
Till you came to me last night in a dream,
Because I am always thinking of you . . .
I wondered if it were really you,
Venturing so long a journey
You came to me through the green of a forest,
You disappeared by a shadowy fortress .
Yet out of the midmost mesh of your snare,

How could you lift your wings and use them?

I woke and the low moon's glimmer on a rafter
Seemed to be your face still floating in the air

There were waters to cross they were wild and
tossing

If you fell there were dragons and river monsters

II

This cloud that has drifted all day through the sky
May like a wanderer never come back

Three nights now I have dreamed of you —

As tender intimate and real as though I were awake

And then abruptly rising to go

You told me the perils of adventure

By river and lake — the storms the wrecks

The fears that are borne on a little boat

And here in my doorway you rubbed your white head

As if there were something puzzling you

Our capital teems with officious people

While you are alone and helpless and poor

Who says that the heavenly net never fails?

It has brought you ill fortune old as you are

A thousand years fame ten thousand years
fame —

What good when you are dead and gone?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A DRAWING OF A HORSE BY GENERAL TS'AO AT SECRETARY WÊI FÊNG'S HOUSE

Throughout this dynasty no one had painted horses
Like the master-spirit, Prince Chiang-tu —
And then to General Ts'ao through his thirty years of fame
The world's gaze turned, for royal steeds
He painted the late Emperor's luminous white horse
For ten days the thunder flew over Dragon Lake,
And a pink-agate plate was sent him from the palace —
The talk of the court-ladies, the marvel of all eyes
The General danced, receiving it in his honoured home . . .
After this rare gift, followed rapidly fine silks
From many of the nobles, requesting that his art
Lend a new lustre to their screens

First came the curly-maned horse of Emperor T'ai-tsung,
Then, for the Kuos, a lion-spotted horse
But now in this painting I see two horses,
A sobering sight for whosoever knew them
They are war-horses Either could face ten thousand.
They make the white silk stretch away into a vast desert
And the seven others with them are almost as noble .
Mist and snow are moving across a cold sky,
And hoofs are cleaving snow-drifts under great trees —
With here a group of officers and there a group of servants
See how these nine horses all vie with one another —
The high clear glance, the deep firm breath

Who understands distinction? Who really cares for art?

You Wei Feng have followed Tsao Chih Tun preceded him

I remember when the late Emperor came toward his Summer Palace

The procession in green feathered rows swept from the eastern sky —

Thirty thousand horses prancing galloping

Fashioned every one of them like the horses in this picture

But now the Imperial Ghost receives secret jade from the River God

For the Emperor hunts crocodiles no longer by the streams

Where you see his Great Gold Tomb you may hear among the pines

A bird grieving in the wind that the Emperor's horses are gone

(87)

A SONG OF A PAINTING

TO GENERAL TSAO

O General descended from Wei's Emperor Wu

You are nobler now than when a noble

Conquerors and their valour perish

But masters of beauty live forever

With your brush work learned from Lady Wei

And second only to Wang Hsi-chih's

Faithful to your art you know no age

Letting wealth and fame drift by like clouds

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

In the years of K'ai-yuan you were much with the Emperor,
Accompanied him often to the Court of the South Wind
When the spirit left great statesmen, on walls of the Hall of
Fame

The point of your brush preserved their living faces
You crowned all the premiers with coronets of office,
You fitted all commanders with arrows at their girdles,
You made the founders of this dynasty, with every hair alive,
Seem to be just back from the fierceness of a battle

The late Emperor had a horse, known as Jade Flower,
Whom artists had copied in various poses
They led him one day to the red marble stairs
With his eyes toward the palace in the deepening air
Then, General, commanded to proceed with your work,
You centred all your being on a piece of silk
And later, when your dragon-horse, born of the sky,
Had banished earthly horses for ten thousand generations,
There was one Jade Flower standing on the dais
And another by the steps, and they marvelled at each other
The Emperor rewarded you with smiles and with gifts,
While officers and men of the stud hung about and stared

Han Kan, your follower, has likewise grown proficient
At representing horses in all their attitudes,
But picturing the flesh, he fails to draw the bone —
So that even the finest are deprived of their spirit
You, beyond the mere skill, used your art divinely —
And expressed, not only horses, but the life of a good man
Yet here you are, wandering in a world of disorder
And sketching from time to time some petty passer-by

People note your case with the whites of their eyes
 There's nobody purer, there's nobody poorer
 Read in the records from earliest times,
 How hard it is to be a great artist

(88)

A LETTER TO CENSOR HAN

I am sad My thoughts are in Yo-chou
 I would hurry there — but I am sick in bed
 Beauty would be facing me across the autumn waters
 Oh to wash my feet in Lake Tung ting and see at its eight corners
 Wildgeese flying high sun and moon both white
 Green maples changing to red in the frosty sky
 Angels bound for the Capital of Heaven near the North Star
 Riding some of them phoenixes and others unicorns
 With banners of hibiscus and with melodies of mist
 Their shadows dancing upside-down in the southern rivers
 Till the Queen of the Stars drowsy with her nectar
 Would forget the winged men on either side of her!
 From the Wizard of the Red Pine this word has come for
 me
 That after his earlier follower he has now a new disciple
 Who formerly at the capital as Emperor Liu's adviser
 In spite of great successes never could be happy
 What are a country's rise and fall?
 Can flesh pots be as fragrant as mountain fruit?

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

I grieve that he is lost far away in the south
May the star of long life accord him its blessing!

O purity, to seize you from beyond the autumn waters
And to place you as an offering in the Court of Imperial Jade
(89)

A SONG OF AN OLD CYPRESS

Beside the Temple of the Great Premier stands an ancient cypress
With a trunk of green bronze and a root of stone
The girth of its white bark would be the reach of forty men
And its tip of kingfisher-blue is two thousand feet in heaven
Dating from the days of a great ruler's great statesman,
Their very tree is loved now and honoured by the people
Clouds come to it from far away, from the Wu cliffs,
And the cold moon glistens on its peak of snow
East of the Silk Pavilion yesterday I found
The ancient ruler and wise statesman both worshipped in one
temple,

Whose tree, with curious branches, ages the whole landscape
In spite of the fresh colours of the windows and the doors
And so firm is the deep root, so established underground,
That its lone lofty boughs can dare the weight of winds,
Its only protection the Heavenly Power,
Its only endurance the art of its Creator

When beams are required to restore a great house,
Though oxen sway ten thousand heads, they cannot move a
mountain

Though a tree writes no memorial yet people understand
 That not unless they fell it can use be made of it
 Its bitter heart may be tenanted now by black and white ants
 But its odorous leaves were once the nest of phoenixes and
 pheasants

Let wise and hopeful men harbour no complaint
 The greater the timber, the tougher it is to use

(90)

A SONG OF DAGGER DANCING

TO A GIRL-PUPIL OF LADY KUNG-SUN

(On the 19th of the Tenth month in the second year of Tai li I saw in the house of the Kuei fu official Yuan Te a girl named Li from Ling ying dancing with a dagger I admired her skill and asked who was her teacher She named Lady Kung sun I remembered that in the third year of Kai yuan at Yen-cheng when I was a little boy I saw Lady Kung sun dance She was the only one in the Imperial Theatre who could dance with this weapon Now she is aged and unknown and even her pupil has passed the heyday of beauty I wrote this poem to express my wistfulness The work of Chang Hsu of the Wu district that great master of grassy writing was improved by his having been present when Lady Kung sun danced in the Yieh district From this may be judged the art of Kung sun)

There lived years ago the beautiful Kung sun
 Who dancing with her dagger drew from all four quarters

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

An audience like mountains lost among themselves
Heaven and earth moved back and forth, following her motions,
Which were bright as when the Archer shot the nine suns down
the sky

And rapid as angels before the wings of dragons
She began like a thunderbolt, venting its anger,
And ended like the shining calm of rivers and the sea .
But vanished are those red lips and those pearly sleeves;
And none but this one pupil bears the perfume of her fame,
This beauty from Ling-ying, at the Town of the White God,
Dancing still and singing in the old blithe way.

And while we reply to each other's questions,
We sigh together, saddened by changes that have come
There were eight thousand ladies in the late Emperor's court,
But none could dance the dagger-dance like Lady Kung-sun
. Fifty years have passed, like the turning of a palm,
Wind and dust, filling the world, obscure the Imperial House
Instead of the Pear-Garden Players, who have blown by like a mist,
There are one or two girl-musicians now — trying to charm the
cold Sun

There are man-size trees by the Emperor's Golden Tomb
I seem to hear dead grasses rattling on the cliffs of Ch'u-t'ang
The song is done, the slow string and quick pipe have
ceased

At the height of joy, sorrow comes with the eastern moon rising
And I, a poor old man, not knowing where to go,
Must harden my feet on the lone hills, toward sickness and despair.

(91)

A SONG OF WAR CHARIOTS

(Written to Music)

The war-chariots rattle,
 The war horses whinny
 Each man of you has a bow and a quiver at his belt
 Father mother son wife stare at you going
 Till dust shall have buried the bridge beyond Chang an
 They run with you crying they tug at your sleeves
 And the sound of their sorrow goes up to the clouds
 And every time a bystander asks you a question
 You can only say to him that you have to go

We remember others at fifteen sent north to guard the river
 And at forty sent west to cultivate the camp-farms
 The mayor wound their turbans for them when they started out
 With their turbaned hair white now they are still at the border
 At the border where the blood of men spills like the sea —
 And still the heart of Emperor Wu is beating for war

Do you know that east of China's mountains in two hundred districts

And in thousands of villages nothing grows but weeds
 And though strong women have bent to the ploughing
 East and west the furrows all are broken down?

Men of China are able to face the stiffest battle
 But their officers drive them like chickens and dogs,
 Whatever is asked of them
 Dare they complain?
 For example this winter

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Held west of the gate,
Challenged for taxes,
How could they pay?

We have learned that to have a son is bad luck —
It is very much better to have a daughter
Who can marry and live in the house of a neighbour,
While under the sod we bury our boys
. Go to the Blue Sea, look along the shore
At all the old white bones forsaken —
New ghosts are wailing there now with the old,
Loudest in the dark sky of a stormy day

A SONG OF FAIR WOMEN

(Written to Music)

On the third day of the Third-month in the freshening weather
Many beauties take the air by the Ch'ang-an water-front,
Receptive, aloof, sweet-mannered, sincere,
With soft fine skin and well-balanced bone
Their embroidered silk robes in the spring sun are gleaming
With a mass of golden peacocks and silver unicorns.
And hanging far down from their temples
Are blue leaves of delicate kingfisher feathers
And following behind them
Is a pearl-laden train, rhythmic with bearers
Some of them are kindred to the Royal House —
The titled Princesses Kuo and Ch'in

Red camel humps are brought them from jade broilers
 And sweet fish is offered them on crystal trays
 Though their food sticks of unicorn horn are lifted languidly
 And the finely wrought phoenix carving knife is very little used
 Fleet horses from the Yellow Gate stirring no dust
 Bring precious dishes constantly from the imperial kitchen
 While a solemn sound of flutes and drums invokes gods
 and spirits
 Guests and courtiers gather all of high rank
 And finally riding slow a dignified horseman
 Dismounts at the pavilion on an embroidered rug
 In a snow of flying willow-cotton whitening the duckweed
 Bluebirds find their way with vermilion handkerchiefs —
 But power can be as hot as flame and burn people's fingers
 Be wary of the Premier watch for his frown

(4)

A SONG OF SOBBING BY THE RIVER

(Written to Music)

I am only an old woodsman whispering a sob
 As I steal like a spring shadow down the Winding River
 Since the palaces ashore are sealed by a thousand gates —
 Fine willows new rushes for whom are you so green?
 I remember a cloud of flags that came from the South Garden
 And ten thousand colours heightening one another
 And the Kingdom's first Lady from the Palace of the Bright Sun

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Attendant on the Emperor in his royal chariot,
And the horsemen before them, each with bow and arrows,
And the snowy horses, champing at bits of yellow gold,
And an archer, breast skyward, shooting through the clouds
And felling with one dart a pair of flying birds

Where are those perfect eyes, where are those pearly teeth?
A blood-stained spirit has no home, has nowhere to return
And clear Wêi waters running east, through the cleft on Dagger-
Tower Trail,

Carry neither there nor here any news of her
People, compassionate, are wishing with tears

That she were as eternal as the river and the flowers

Mounted Tartars, in the yellow twilight, cloud the town
with dust

I am fleeing south, but I linger — gazing northward toward the
throne

(4a)

A SONG OF A PRINCE DEPOSED

(Written to Music)

Along the wall of the Capital a white-headed crow
Flies to the Gate where Autumn Enters and screams there in the
night,

Then turns again and pecks among the roofs of a tall mansion
Whose lord, a mighty mandarin, has fled before the Tartars,
With his golden whip now broken, his nine war-horses dead

And his own flesh and bone scattered to the winds
 There's a rare ring of green coral underneath the vest
 Of a Prince at a street-corner bitterly sobbing
 Who has to give a false name to anyone who asks him —
 Just a poor fellow hoping for employment
 A hundred days hiding in grasses and thorns
 Show on his body from head to foot
 But since their first Emperor all with hook noses
 These Dragons look different from ordinary men
 Wolves are in the palace now and Dragons are lost in the desert —
 O Prince be very careful of your most sacred person!
 I dare not address you long here by the open road
 Nor even to stand beside you for more than these few moments
 Last night with the spring wind there came a smell of blood
 The old Capital is full of camels from the east
 Our northern warriors are sound enough of body and of hand —
 Oh why so brave in olden times and so craven now?
 Our Emperor we hear has given his son the throne
 And the southern border-chieftains are loyally inclined
 And the Hua men and Li men tribes are gathering to avenge us
 But still be careful — keep yourself well hidden from the dagger
 Unhappy Prince I beg you be constantly on guard —
 Till power blow to your aid from the Five Imperial Tombs

(4d 92)

,

Tu Hsun-hé

鶴荀杜

A SIGH IN THE SPRING PALACE

Knowing beauty my misfortune,
I face my mirror with a sigh
To please a fastidious emperor,
How shall I array myself? .
Birds flock and sing when the wind is warm,
Flower-shadows climb when the sun is high —
And year after year girls in the south
Are picking hibiscus, dreaming of love!

(93)

Tu Mu

牧 杜

I CLIMB TO THE LO YU TOMBS
BEFORE LEAVING FOR WU HSING

Even in this good reign how can I serve?
The lone cloud rather the Buddhist peace
Once more before crossing river and sea
I face the great Emperor's mountain tomb

(94)

BY THE PURPLE CLIFF

On a part of a spear still unruined in the sand
I have burnished the symbol of an ancient kingdom
Except for a wind aiding General Chou Yu
Spring would have sealed both Chiao girls in Copper Bird Palace

(52a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A MOORING ON THE CH'IN-HUAI RIVER

Mist veils the cold stream, and moonlight the sand,
As I moor in the shadow of a river-tavern,
Where girls, with no thought of a perished kingdom,
Gaily echo *A Song of Courtyard Flowers*

(4a)

A MESSAGE TO HAN CHO THE YANG-CHOU MAGISTRATE

There are faint green mountains and far green waters,
And grasses in this river region not yet faded by autumn,
And clear in the moon on the Twenty-Four Bridges,
Girls white as jade are teaching flute-music

(95)

A CONFESSION

With my wine-bottle, watching by river and lake
For a lady so tiny as to dance on my palm,
I awake, after dreaming ten years in Yang-chou,
Known as fickle, even in the Street of Blue Houses

(26a, 45a)

IN THE AUTUMN NIGHT

Her candle light is silvery on her chill bright screen
 Her little silk fan is for fireflies
 She lies watching her staircase cold in the moon
 And two stars parted by the River of Heaven

(96)

PARTING

I

She is slim and supple and not yet fourteen
 The young spring tip of a cardamon spray
 On the Yang-chou Road for three miles in the breeze
 Every pearl screen is open But there's no one like her

II

How can a deep love seem deep love
 How can it smile at a farewell feast?
 Even the candle feeling our sadness
 Weeps as we do all night long

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

THE GARDEN OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY

Stories of passion make sweet dust,
Calm water, grasses unconcerned.
At sunset, when birds cry in the wind,
Petals are falling like a girl's robe long ago.

(97)

A NIGHT AT A TAVERN

Solitary at the tavern,
I am shut in with loneliness and grief
Under the cold lamp, I brood on the past,
I am kept awake by a lost wildgoose
 Roused at dawn from a misty dream,
I read, a year late, news from home —
And I remember the moon like smoke on the river
And a fisher-boat moored there, under my door

(98)

Tu Shen yen

言審杜

ON A WALK IN THE EARLY SPRING

HARMONIZING A POEM BY MY FRIEND LU

STATIONED AT CHANG-CHOU

Only to wanderers can come
Ever new the shock of beauty
Of white cloud and red cloud dawning from the sea
Of spring in the wild plum and river willow
I watch a yellow oriole dart in the warm air
And a green water plant reflected by the sun
Suddenly an old song fills
My heart with home my eyes with tears

(99 9)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Wang Ch'ang-ling

王昌齡

AT HIBISCUS INN

PARTING WITH HSIN CHEN

With this cold night-rain hiding the river, you have come into Wu
In the level dawn, all alone, you will be starting for the mountains
of Ch'u

Answer, if they ask of me at Lo-yang
"One-hearted as ice in a crystal vase"

IN HER QUIET WINDOW

Too young to have learned what sorrow means,
Attired for spring, she climbs to her high chamber
The new green of the street-willows is wounding her
heart —
Just for a title she sent him to war

A SONG OF THE SPRING PALACE

Last night while a gust blew peach petals open
And the moon shone high on the Palace Beyond Time
The Emperor gave P'ing yang for her dancing
Brocades against the cold spring wind

(93)

A SIGH IN THE COURT OF PERPETUAL FAITH

(Written to Music)

She brings a broom at dawn to the Golden Palace doorway
And dusts the hall from end to end with her round fan
And for all her jade whiteness she envies a crow
Whose cold wings are kindled in the Court of the Bright Sun

(100)

OVER THE BORDER

(Written to Music)

The moon goes back to the time of Chin the wall to the time
of Han
And the road our troops are travelling goes back three hundred
miles
Oh for the Winged General at the Dragon City —
That never a Tartar horseman might cross the Yin Mountains!

(59)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

WITH MY BROTHER AT THE SOUTH STUDY THINKING IN THE MOONLIGHT OF VICE-PREFECT TS'UÊI IN SHAN-YIN

Lying on a high seat in the south study,
We have lifted the curtain — and we see the rising moon
Brighten with pure light the water and the grove
And flow like a wave on our window and our door.
It will move through the cycle, full moon and then crescent again,
Calmly, beyond our wisdom, altering new to old

Our chosen one, our friend, is now by a limpid river —
Singing, perhaps, a plaintive eastern song
He is far, far away from us, three hundred miles away
And yet a breath of orchids comes along the wind

(101)

AT A BORDER-FORTRESS

(Written to Music)

Cicadas complain of thin mulberry-trees
In the Eighth-month chill at the frontier pass
Through the gate and back again, all along the road,
There is nothing anywhere but yellow reeds and grasses
And the bones of soldiers from Yu and from Ping
Who have buried their lives in the dusty sand

Let never a cavalier stir you to envy
With boasts of his horse and his horsemanship

UNDER A BORDER FORTRESS

(Written to Music)

Drink my horse while we cross the autumn water!—
The stream is cold and the wind like a sword
As we watch against the sunset on the sandy plain,
Far far away shadowy Ling tao
Old battles waged by those long walls
Once were proud on all men's tongues
But antiquity now is a yellow dust
Confusing in the grasses its ruins and white bones

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Wang Han

翰 上.

A SONG OF LIANG-CHOU

They sing, they drain their cups of jade,

They strum on horseback their guitars

Why laugh when they fall asleep drunk on the sand? —
How many soldiers ever come home?

Wang Po

王勃

FAREWELL TO VICE-PREFECT TU
SETTING OUT FOR HIS OFFICIAL POST IN SHU

By this wall that surrounds the three Ch'in districts
Through a mist that makes five rivers one
We bid each other a sad farewell
We two officials going opposite ways
And yet while China holds our friendship
And heaven remains our neighbourhood
Why should you linger at the fork of the road,
Wiping your eyes like a heart broken child?

Wang Wan

灣 十:

A MOORING UNDER NORTH FORT HILL

Under blue mountains we wound our way,
My boat and I, along green water,
Until the banks at low tide widened,
With no wind stirring my lone sail
. . . Night now yields to a sea of sun,
And the old year melts in freshets
At last I can send my messengers —
Wildgeese, homing to Lo-yang

Wang Wei

維 王

DEER PARK HERMITAGE

There seems to be no one on the empty mountain
And yet I think I hear a voice
Where sunlight entering a grove
Shines back to me from the green moss

(103)

IN A RETREAT AMONG BAMBOOS

Leaning alone in the close bamboos
I am playing my lute and humming a song
Too softly for anyone to hear —
Except my comrade the bright moon

A PARTING

*Friend I have watched you down the mountain
Till now in the dark I close my thatch door
Grasses return again green in the spring
But O my Prince of Friends do you?

(68)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

ONE-HEARTED

When those red berries come in springtime,
Flushing on your southland branches,
Take home an armful, for my sake,
As a symbol of our love

LINES

You who have come from my old country,
Tell me what has happened there!
Was the plum, when you passed my silken window,
Opening its first cold blossom?

ON THE MOUNTAIN HOLIDAY

THINKING OF MY BROTHERS IN SHAN-TUNG

All alone in a foreign land,
I am twice as homesick on this day
When brothers carry dogwood up the mountain,
Each of them a branch — and my branch missing

WANG WEI

A SONG AT WEI CH ENG

(Written to Music)

A morning rain has settled the dust in Wei-ch eng
Willows are green again in the tavern dooryard
Wait till we empty one more cup —
West of Yang Gate there'll be no old friends

(104)

A SONG OF AN AUTUMN NIGHT

(Written to Music)

Under the crescent moon a light autumn dew
Has chilled the robe she will not change —
And she touches a silver lute all night
Afraid to go back to her empty room

A MESSAGE FROM MY LODGE AT

WANG CH UAN

To PAI TI

The mountains are cold and blue now
And the autumn waters have run all day
By my thatch door leaning on my staff
I listen to cicadas in the evening wind

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Sunset lingers at the ferry,
Supper-smoke floats up from the houses
 Oh, when shall I pledge the great Hermit again
And sing a wild poem at Five Willows?

(34, 2a)

AN AUTUMN EVENING IN THE MOUNTAINS

After rain the empty mountain
Stands autumnal in the evening,
Moonlight in its groves of pine,
Stones of crystal in its brooks
Bamboos whisper of washer-girls bound home,
Lotus-leaves yield before a fisher-boat
And what does it matter that springtime has gone,
While you are here, O Prince of Friends?

(68)

BOUND HOME TO MOUNT SUNG

The limpid river, past its bushes
Running slowly as my chariot,
Becomes a fellow voyager
Returning home with the evening birds
A ruined city-wall overtops an old ferry,

WANG WEI

Autumn sunset floods the peaks
Far away beside Mount Sung
I shall close my door and be at peace

(14)

MOUNT CHUNG NAN

Its massive height near the City of Heaven
Joins a thousand mountains to the corner of the sea
Clouds when I look back close behind me
Mists when I enter them are gone
A central peak divides the wilds
And weather into many valleys
 Needing a place to spend the night
I call to a wood-cutter over the river

(32)

ANSWERING VICE PREFECT CHANG

As the years go by give me but peace
Freedom from ten thousand matters
I ask myself and always answer
What can be better than coming home?
A wind from the pine trees blows my sash
And my lute is bright with the mountain moon
You ask me about good and evil fortune?
Hark on the lake there's a fisherman singing!

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

TOWARD THE TEMPLE OF HEAPED FRAGRANCE

Not knowing the way to the Temple of Heaped Fragrance,
Under miles of mountain-cloud I have wandered
Through ancient woods without a human track,
But now on the height I hear a bell
A rillet sings over winding rocks,
The sun is tempered by green pines .
And at twilight, close to an emptying pool,
Thought can conquer the Passion-Dragon

A MESSAGE TO COMMISSIONER LI AT TSŨ-CHOU

From ten thousand valleys the trees touch heaven;
On a thousand peaks cuckoos are calling,
And, after a night of mountain rain,
From each summit come hundreds of silken cascades
 If girls are asked in tribute the fibre they weave,
Or farmers quarrel over taro fields,
Preside as wisely as Wên-wêng did . . .
Is fame to be only for the ancients?

(105)

A VIEW OF THE HAN RIVER

With its three southern branches reaching the Chu border
 And its nine streams touching the gateway of Ching
 This river runs beyond heaven and earth
 Where the colour of mountains both is and is not
 The dwellings of men seem floating along
 On ripples of the distant sky —
 These beautiful days here in Hsiang yang
 Make drunken my old mountain heart!

MY RETREAT AT MOUNT CHUNG NAN

My heart in middle age found the Way
 And I came to dwell at the foot of this mountain
 When the spirit moves I wander alone
 Amid beauty that is all for me
 I will walk till the water checks my path
 Then sit and watch the rising clouds —
 And some day meet an old wood-cutter
 And talk and laugh and never return

(32 75)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

AN EARLY AUDIENCE AT THE PALACE OF LIGHT

HARMONIZING SECRETARY CHIA CHIH'S POEM

The red-capped Cock-Man has just announced morning;
The Keeper of the Robes brings Jade-Cloud Furs,
Heaven's nine doors reveal the palace and its courtyards,
And the coats of many countries bow to the Pearl Crown.
Sunshine has entered the giants' carven palms,
Incense wreathes the Dragon Robe
The audience adjourns — and the five-coloured edict
Sets girdle-beads clinking toward the Lake of the Phoenix.

(9, 9a, 106)

LOOKING DOWN IN A SPRING-RAIN ON THE COURSE FROM FAIRY-MOUNTAIN PALACE TO THE PAVILION OF INCREASE

HARMONIZING THE EMPEROR'S POEM

Round a turn of the Ch'in Fortress winds the Wêi River, c
And Yellow Mountain foot-hills enclose the Court of China,
Past the South Gate willows comes the Car of Many Bells
On the upper Palace-Garden Road — a solid length of blossom,
A Forbidden City roof holds two phoenixes in cloud,

WANG WEI

The foliage of spring shelters multitudes from rain
And now when the heavens are propitious for action
Here is our Emperor ready — no wasteful wanderer

(4a 9)

IN MY LODGE AT WANG CHUAN
AFTER A LONG RAIN

The woods have stored the rain and slow comes the smoke
As rice is cooked on faggots and carried to the fields,
Over the quiet marsh land flies a white egret
And mango-birds are singing in the full summer trees
I have learned to watch in peace the mountain morning glories
To eat split dewy sunflower seeds under a bough of pine
To yield the post of honour to any boor at all
Why should I frighten sea gulls even with a thought?

(107)

HARMONIZING A POEM BY
PALACE ATTENDANT KUO

High beyond the thick wall a tower shines with sunset
Where peach and plum are blooming and the willow-cotton flies
You have heard in your office the court bell of twilight
Birds find perches officials head for home

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Your morning-jade will tinkle as you thread the golden palace,
You will bring the word of Heaven from the closing gates at night
And I should serve there with you, but being full of years,
I have taken off official robes and am resting from my troubles.

(9)

AT PARTING

I dismount from my horse and I offer you wine,
And I ask you where you are going and why
And you answer "I am discontent
And would rest at the foot of the southern mountain.
So give me leave and ask me no questions
White clouds pass there without end"

TO CHI-WU CH' IEN BOUND HOME AFTER FAILING IN AN EXAMINATION

In a happy reign there should be no hermits,
The wise and able should consult together . . .
So you, a man of the eastern mountains,
Gave up your life of picking herbs
And came all the way to the Gate of Gold —
But you found your devotion unavailing
To spend the Day of No Fire on one of the southern rivers,
You have mended your spring clothes here in these northern cities

I pour you the farewell wine as you set out from the capital —
 Soon I shall be left behind here by my bosom friend
 In your sail boat of sweet cinnamon wood
 You will float again toward your own thatch door,
 Led along by distant trees
 To a sunset shining on a far away town
 What though your purpose happened to fail,
 Doubt not that some of us can hear high music

(1 54)

A GREEN STREAM

I have sailed the River of Yellow Flowers
 Borne by the channel of a green stream
 Rounding ten thousand turns through the mountains
 On a journey of less than thirty miles
 Rapids hum over heaped rocks
 But where light grows dim in the thick pines
 The surface of an inlet sways with nut horns
 And weeds are lush along the banks
 Down in my heart I have always been as pure
 As this limpid water is
 Oh to remain on a broad flat rock
 And to cast a fishing line forever!

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

A FARM-HOUSE ON THE WÊI RIVER

In the slant of the sun on the country-side,
Cattle and sheep trail home along the lane,
And a rugged old man in a thatch door
Leans on a staff and thinks of his son, the herd-boy
There are whirring pheasants, full wheat-cars,
Silk-worms asleep, pared mulberry-leaves
And the farmers, returning with hoes on their shoulders,
Hail one another familiarly
No wonder I long for the simple life
And am sighing the old song, *Oh, to go Back Again!*

(108)

THE BEAUTIFUL HSI SHIH

Since beauty is honoured all over the Empire,
How could Hsi Shih remain humbly at home? —
Washing clothes at dawn by a southern lake —
And that evening a great lady in a palace of the north
Lowly one day, no different from the others,
The next day exalted, everyone praising her
No more would her own hands powder her face
Or arrange on her shoulders a silken robe
And the more the King loved her, the lovelier she looked,
Blinding him away from wisdom

Girls who had once washed silk beside her
 Were kept at a distance from her chariot
 And none of the girls in her neighbours houses
 By pursing their brows could copy her beauty

(109)

A SONG OF A GIRL FROM LO YANG

(Written to Music)

There's a girl from Lo-yang in the door across the street
 She looks fifteen she may be a little older

While her master rides his rapid horse with jade bit and
 bridle

Her handmaid brings her cod fish in a golden plate

On her painted pavilions facing red towers

Cornices are pink and green with peach bloom and with willow

Canopies of silk awn her seven scented chair

And rare fans shade her home to her nine flowered curtains

Her lord with rank and wealth and in the bud of life

Exceeds in munificence the richest men of old

He favours this girl of lowly birth he has her taught to dance

And he gives away his coral trees to almost anyone

The wind of dawn just stirs when his nine soft lights go out

Those nine soft lights like petals in a flying chain of flowers

Between dances she has barely time for singing over the songs

No sooner is she dressed again than incense burns before her

Those she knows in town are only the rich and the lavish

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And day and night she is visiting the hosts of the gayest mansions
Who notices the girl from Yuch with a face of white jade,
Humble, poor, alone, by the river, washing silk?

(110)

A SONG OF AN OLD GENERAL

(Written to Music)

When he was a youth of fifteen or twenty,
He chased a wild horse, he caught him and rode him,
He shot the white-browed mountain tiger,
He defied the yellow-bristled Horseman of Yieh.
Fighting single-handed for a thousand miles,
With his naked dagger he could hold a multitude

Granted that the troops of China were as swift as heaven's
thunder

And that Tartar soldiers perished in pitfalls fanged with iron,
General Wêi Ch'ing's victory was only a thing of chance
And General Li Kuang's thwarted effort was his fate, not his fault
Since this man's retirement he is looking old and worn
Experience of the world has hastened his white hairs
Though once his quick dart never missed the right eye of a bird,
Now knotted veins and tendons make his left arm like an osier
He is sometimes at the road-side selling melons from his garden,
He is sometimes planting willows round his hermitage
His lonely lane is shut away by a dense grove,
His vacant window looks upon the far cold mountains
But, if he prayed, the waters would come gushing for his men

And never would he wanton his cause away with wine

War-clouds are spreading under the Ho-lan Range
 Back and forth day and night, go feathered messages
 In the three River Provinces the governors call young men —
 And five imperial edicts have summoned the old general
 So he dusts his iron coat and shines it like snow —
 Waves his dagger from its jade hilt in a dance of starry steel
 He is ready with his strong northern bow to smite the Tartar
 chieftain —

That never a foreign war-dress may affront the Emperor

There once was an aged Prefect forgotten and far away
 Who still could manage triumph with a single stroke

(III)

A SONG OF PEACH BLOSSOM RIVER

(Written to Music)

A fisherman is drifting enjoying the spring mountains
 And the peach trees on both banks lead him to an ancient source
 Watching the fresh-coloured trees he never thinks of distance
 Till he comes to the end of the blue stream and suddenly — strange
 men!

It's a cave — with a mouth so narrow that he has to crawl through
 But then it opens wide again on a broad and level path —
 And far beyond he faces clouds crowning a reach of trees
 And thousands of houses shadowed round with flowers and
 bamboos

Woodsmen tell him their names in the ancient speech of Han

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

And clothes of the Ch'in Dynasty are worn by all these people
Living on the uplands, above the Wu ling River,
On farms and in gardens that are like a world apart,
Their dwellings at peace under pines in the clear moon,
Until sunrise fills the low sky with crowing and barking
At news of a stranger the people all assemble,
And each of them invites him home and asks him where he was
born.

Alleys and paths are cleared for him of petals in the morning,
And fishermen and farmers bring him their loads at dusk .
They had left the world long ago, they had come here seeking
refuge,

They have lived like angels ever since, blessedly far away,
No one in the cave knowing anything outside,
Outsiders viewing only empty mountains and thick clouds

The fisherman, unaware of his great good fortune,
Begins to think of country, of home, of worldly ties,
Finds his way out of the cave again, past mountains and past
rivers,

Intending some time to return, when he has told his kin.
He studies every step he takes, fixes it well in mind,
And forgets that cliffs and peaks may vary their appearance
. . It is certain that to enter through the deepness of the
mountain,

A green river leads you, into a misty wood
But now, with spring-floods everywhere and floating 'peach-
petals — •

Which is the way to go, to find that hidden source?

(2)

Wéi Chuang

莊 子

A NAN KING LANDSCAPE

Though a shower bends the river grass a bird is singing
 While ghosts of the Six Dynasties pass like a dream
 Around the Forbidden City under weeping willows
 Which loom still for three miles along the misty moat

(112)

A NIGHT THOUGHT ON TERRACE TOWER

Far through the night a harp is sighing
 With a sadness of wind and rain in the strings
 There's a solitary lantern a bugle-call —
 And beyond Terrace Tower down goes the moon
 Fragrant grasses have changed and faded
 While still I have been hoping that my old friend would come
 There are no more messengers I can send him
 Now that the wildgeese have turned south

(39a)

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Wéi Ying-wu

物應幸

AN AUTUMN NIGHT MESSAGE

To Ch'iu

As I walk in the cool of the autumn night,
Thinking of you, singing my poem,
I hear a mountain pine-cone fall
You also seem to be awake

AT CH'U-CHOU ON THE WESTERN STREAM

Where tender grasses rim the stream
And deep boughs trill with mango-birds,
On the spring flood of last night's rain
The ferry-boat moves as though someone were poling

(113)

A GREETING ON THE HUAI RIVER
TO MY OLD FRIENDS FROM LIANG CHUAN

We used to be companions on the Kiang and the Han
And as often as we met we were likely to be tipsy
Since we left one another floating apart like clouds
Ten years have run like water — till at last we join again
And we talk again and laugh again just as in earlier days
Except that the hair on our heads is tinged now with grey
Why not come along then all of us together
And face the autumn mountains and sail along the Huai?

A FAREWELL IN THE EVENING RAIN
To LI TSAO

Is it raining on the river all the way to Ch u? —
The evening bell comes to us from Nan king
Your wet sail drags and is loath to be going
And shadowy birds are flying slow
We cannot see the deep ocean gate —
Only the boughs at Pu kou newly dripping
Likewise because of our great love
There are threads of water on our faces

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

TO MY FRIENDS LI TAN AND YUAN HSI

We met last among flowers, among flowers we parted,
And here, a year later, there are flowers again,
But, with ways of the world too strange to foretell,
Spring only brings me grief and fatigue
I am sick, and I think of my home in the country —
Ashamed to take pay while so many are idle
. . . In my western tower, because of your promise,
I have watched the full moons come and go

ENTERTAINING LITERARY MEN IN MY OFFICIAL RESIDENCE ON A RAINY DAY

Outside are insignia, shown in state,
But here are sweet incense-clouds, quietly ours
Wind and rain, coming in from sea,
Have cooled this pavilion above the lake
And driven the feverish heat away
From where my eminent guests are gathered
. . . Ashamed though I am of my high position
While people lead unhappy lives,
Let us reasonably banish care
And just be friends, enjoying nature
Though we have to go without fish and meat,
There are fruits and vegetables aplenty

We bow, we take our cups of wine,
 We give our attention to beautiful poems
 When the mind is exalted the body is lightened
 And feels as if it could float in the wind

Su-chou is famed as a centre of letters
 And all you writers coming here
 Prove that the name of a great land
 Is made by better things than wealth

SETTING SAIL ON THE YANG TSZE

TO SECRETARY YUAN

Wistful away from my friends and kin,
 Through mist and fog I float and float
 With the sail that bears me toward Lo-yang
 In Yang-chou trees linger bell notes of evening
 Marking the day and the place of our parting
 When shall we meet again and where?

Destiny is a boat on the waves
 Borne to and fro beyond our will

A POEM TO A TAOIST HERMIT
ON CHUAN CHIAO MOUNTAIN

My office has grown cold today
 And I suddenly think of my mountain friend
 Gathering firewood down in the valley

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Or boiling white stones for potatoes in his hut .
I wish I might take him a cup of wine
To cheer him through the evening storm,
But in fallen leaves that have heaped the bare slopes,
How should I ever find his footprints!

(62a)

ON MEETING MY FRIEND FĒNG CHU IN THE CAPITAL

Out of the east you visit me,
With the rain of Pa-ling still on your clothes,
I ask you what you have come here for,
You say "To buy an ax for cutting wood in the mountains"
. . Hidden deep in a haze of blossom,
Swallow fledglings chirp at ease
As they did when we parted, a year ago . .
How grey our temples have grown since then!

MOORING AT TWILIGHT IN YU-YI DISTRICT

Furling my sail near the town of Huai,
I find for harbour a little cove
Where a sudden breeze whips up the waves
. . The sun is growing dim now and sinks in the dusk

People are coming home The bright mountain peak darkens
 Wildgeese fly down to an island of white weeds
 At midnight I think of a northern city gate
 And I hear a bell tolling between me and sleep

EAST OF THE TOWN

From office confinement all year long
 I have come out of town to be free this morning
 Where willows harmonize the wind
 And green hills lighten the cares of the world
 I lean by a tree and rest myself
 Or wander up and down a stream
 Mists have wet the fragrant meadows
 A spring dove calls from some hidden place
 With quiet surroundings the mind is at peace
 But beset with affairs it grows restless again
 Here I shall finally build me a cabin
 As Tao Chien built one long ago

(22)

TO MY DAUGHTER
 ON HER MARRIAGE INTO THE YANG FAMILY

My heart has been heavy all day long
 Because you have so far to go
 The marriage of a girl away from her parents

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

Is the launching of a little boat on a great river.

. You were very young when your mother died,
Which made me the more tender of you.
Your elder sister has looked out for you,
And now you are both crying and cannot part
This makes my grief the harder to bear,
Yet it is right that you should go.
. . . Having had from childhood no mother to guide you,
How will you honour your mother-in-law?
It's an excellent family, they will be kind to you,
They will forgive you your mistakes —
Although ours has been so pure and poor
That you can take them no great dowry
Be gentle and respectful, as a woman should be,
Careful of word and look, observant of good example
. . . After this morning we separate,
There's no knowing for how long . . .
I always try to hide my feelings —
They are suddenly too much for me,
When I turn and see my younger daughter
With the tears running down her cheek

Wen Ting yun

筠庭溫

SHE SIGHS ON HER JADE LUTE

A cool matted silvery bed but no dreams
An evening sky as green as water shadowed with tender clouds
But far off over the southern rivers the calling of a wildgoose
And here a twelve story building lonely under the moon

TO A FRIEND BOUND EAST

The old fort brims with yellow leaves
You insist upon forsaking this place where you have lived
A high wind blows at Han yang Ferry
And sunrise lights the summit of Ying men
Who will be left for me along the upper Yang tsze
After your solitary skiff has entered the end of the sky?
I ask you over and over when we shall meet again
While we soften with winecups this ache of farewell

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

NEAR THE LI-CHOU FERRY

The sun has set in the water's clear void,
And little blue islands are one with the sky
On the bank a horse neighs A boat goes by
People gather at a willow-clump and wait for the ferry.
Down by the sand-bushes sea-gulls are circling,
Over the wide river-lands flies an egret
 . Can you guess why I sail, like an ancient wise lover,
Through the misty Five Lakes, forgetting words?

(109)

THE TEMPLE OF SU WU

Though our envoy, Su Wu, is gone, body and soul,
This temple survives, these trees endure
Wildgeese through the clouds are still calling to the moon there
And hill-sheep unshepherded graze along the border
 . . . Returning, he found his country changed
Since with youthful cap and sword he had left it.
His bitter adventures had won him no title . . .
Autumn-waves endlessly sob in the river.

(114)

YUAN CHEN

Yuan Chen

種 元

THE SUMMER PALACE

In the faded old imperial palace
Peonies are red but no one comes to see them
The ladies in waiting have grown white haired
Debating the pomps of Emperor Hsuan tsung

(4d)

AN ELEGY

I

O youngest best loved daughter of Hsieh
Who unluckily married this penniless scholar
You patched my clothes from your own wicker basket
And I coaxed off your hairpins of gold to buy wine with
For dinner we had to pick wild herbs —
And to use dry locust leaves for our kindling
Today they are paying me a hundred thousand —
And all that I can bring to you is a temple sacrifice

II

We joked, long ago, about one of us dying,
 But suddenly, before my eyes, you are gone
 Almost all your clothes have been given away,
 Your needlework is sealed, I dare not look at it . . .
 I continue your bounty to our men and our maids —
 Sometimes, in a dream, I bring you gifts

 This is a sorrow that all mankind must know —
 But not as those know it who have been poor together

III

I sit here alone, mourning for us both
 How many years do I lack now of my threescore and ten?
 There have been better men than I to whom heaven denied a son,
 There was a poet better than I whose dead wife could not hear
 him

What have I to hope for in the darkness of our tomb?
 You and I had little faith in a meeting after death —
 Yet my open eyes can see all night
 That lifelong trouble of your brow.

(115)

Yuan Chieh

結 元

TO THE TAX COLLECTORS
AFTER THE BANDITS RETREAT

(In the year Kuei mao the bandits from Hsi yuan entered Tao-chou set fire raided killed and looted The whole district was almost ruined The next year the bandits came again and attacking the neighbouring prefecture Yung passed this one by It was not because we were strong enough to defend ourselves but probably because they pitied us And how now can these commissioners bear to impose extra taxes? I have written this poem for the collectors information)

I still remember those days of peace —
 Twenty years among mountains and forests
 The pure stream running past my yard
 The caves and valleys at my door
 Taxes were light and regular then
 And I could sleep soundly and late in the morning —
 Till suddenly came a sorry change
 For years now I have been serving in the army
 When I began here as an official
 The mountain bandits were rising again
 But the town was so small it was spared by the thieves
 And the people so poor and so pitiable

THE JADE MOUNTAIN

That all the other districts were looted
And this one this time let alone

. Do you imperial commissioners
Mean to be less kind than bandits?
The people you force to pay the poll
Are like creatures frying over a fire.
And how can you sacrifice human lives,
Just to be known as able collectors? —

. . Oh, let me fling down my official seal,
Let me be a lone fisherman in a small boat
And support my family on fish and wheat
And content my old age with rivers and lakes!

A DRINKING SONG AT STONE-FISH LAKE

(I have used grain from the public fields, for distilling wine After my office hours I have the wine loaded on a boat and then I seat my friends on the bank of the lake The little wine-boats come to each of us and supply us with wine We seem to be drinking on Pa Islet in Lake Tung-t'ing And I write this poem)

Stone-Fish Lake is like Lake Tung-t'ing —

When the top of Chun is green and the summer tide is rising

With the mountain for a table, and the lake a fount of wine,
The tipplers all are settled along the sandy shore
Though a stiff wind for days has roughened the water,
Wine-boats constantly arrive .

I have a long-necked gourd and, happy on Pa Island,

I am pouring a drink in every direction, doing away with care

Appendices

HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY

HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY

I

- The Five T'i Periods 2953-2206
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The Shang Dynasty 1765-1122
The Chou Dynasty 1121-256
The Ch'in Dynasty 255-207
The Han Dynasty 206-219
The Three Kingdoms Period 220-264
The Chin Dynasty 265-419
The Southern and Northern Dynasties 420-588
The Sui Dynasty 589-617
The T'ang Dynasty 618-906
The Five Dynasties 907-959
The Sung Dynasty 960-1279
The Liao and Chin Tartar Dynasties 916-1234
The Yuan or Mongol Dynasty 1280-1367
The Ming Dynasty 1368-1643
The Ch'ing or Manchu Dynasty 1644-1911

II

THE TANG DYNASTY

- 1 Emperor Kao-tsu Wu te Period 618-626
- 2 Emperor Tai tsung Cheng kuan Period 627-649

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- 3 Emperor Kao-tsung, Yung-huêi Period, 650-655
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- 4 Emperor Chung-tsung, Ssŭ-shêng Period, 684
- 5 Emperor Juêi-tsung, Ch'uêi-kung Period, 685-688
- 6 The Woman Emperor Wu-chao, T'ien-shou Period, 690-691
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- 7 Emperor Chung-tsung restored, Shên-lung Period, 705-706
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HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY

- 8 Emperor Juei tsung Ching yun Period 710-711
Hsien tien Period 712
- 9 Emperor Hsuan tsung Kai yuan Period 713-741
T'ien pao Period 742-755
- 10 Emperor Su tsung Chih Te Period 756-757
Chien yuan Period 758-759
Shang yuan Period 760-761
Pao-yin Period 762
- 11 Emperor Tai tsung Kuang te Period 763-764
Yung tai Period 765
Ta li Period 766-779
- 12 Emperor Te tsung Chien-chung Period 780-783
Hsing yuan Period 784
Cheng yuan Period 785-804
- 13 Emperor Shun tsung Yung-cheng Period 805
- 14 Emperor Hsien tsung Yuan ho Period 806-820
- 15 Emperor Mu tsung Ch'ang-ch'ing Period 821-824
- 16 Emperor Ching tsung Pao-li Period 825-826
- 17 Emperor Wen tsung Tai ho Period 827-835
Kai-ch'eng Period 836-840
- 18 Emperor Wu tsung Hwei-ch'ang Period 841-846
- 19 Emperor Hsuan tsung Ta-chung Period 847-859
- 20 Emperor Yi tsung Hsien tung Period 860-873
- 21 Emperor Hsi tsung Chien fu Period 874-879
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22 Emperor Chao-tsung, Lung-chi Period, 889

Ta-shun Period, 890-891

Ch'ing-fu Period, 892-893

Ch'ien-ning Period, 894-897

Kuang-hua Period, 898-900

T'ien-fu Period, 901-903

T'ien-yu Period, 904-906

CHRONOLOGY OF THE POETS

CHRONOLOGY OF THE POETS

<i>Names</i>		<i>Dates</i>
Anonymous	氏名無	
Chang Chi (1)	繼 張	Graduated ¹ between 742 and 755 lived to 780
Chang Chi (2)	籍 張	Graduated 799
Chang Chiao	喬 張	Graduated about 870
Chang Chien	建 常	Graduated 727
Chang Chiu ling	齡九張	673-740
Chang Hsu	旭 張	Early 8th century
Chang Hu	祐 張	9th century
Chang Pi	必 張	10th century
Chen Tao	陶 陳	824-882
Chen Tzu ang	昂子陳	656-698
Cheng Tien	旼 鄭	656-698
Chia Tao	島 賈	788-843
Chien Chi	起 錢	Graduated 751
Chin Chang hsü	緒昌金	10th century
Chin Tao-yu	王韜秦	Graduated 882
Chiu Wei	爲 邱	8th century died at age 96
Chi wu Chien	潛毋綦	Graduated 726
Chu Ching yu	餘度朱	Graduated 825

¹ The term graduated is used in the sense of receiving an official degree at the government examinations

APPENDICES

<i>Names</i>		<i>Dates</i>
Ch'uan Tê-yu	輿德權	759-818
Han Hung	翺韓	Graduated 754
Han Wu	倓韓	Graduated 889, died 905
Han Yu	愈韓	768-823
Hê Chih-chang	章知賀	659-744
Hsu Hun	渾許	Graduated 832
Hsuan-tsung, Emperor	宗文	685-761, reigned 713-755
Hsueh Fêng	逢薛	Graduated about 845
Huang-fu Jan	冉甫卓	714-767
Kao Shih	滴高	Died 765
Ku K'uang	況顧	Graduated either in 756 or in 757
L1 Ch'1	頤李	Graduated 725
L1 P'in	頻李	Graduated 854
L1 Po	白李	699-762
L1 Shang-yin	隱商李	813-858
L1 Tuan	端李	Graduated 770
L1 Yi	益李	Graduated 769, died 827
Liu Chang-ch'ing	卿長劉	Graduated 733
Liu Chung-yung	庸中柳	8th and 9th centuries
Liu Fang-p'ing	平方劉	8th and 9th centuries
Liu Shên-hsu	虛春劉	Flourished about 742-755
Liu Tsung-yuan	元宗柳	773-819
Liu Yu-hsi	錫禹劉	772-842
Lo Ping-wang	王賓略	Flourished early 7th century
Ma Tai	戴馬	Graduated 844

CHRONOLOGY OF THE POETS

<i>Names</i>		<i>Dates</i>
Meng Chiao	郊 孟	751-814
Meng Hao-jan	然浩孟	699-740
One at the Western		
Front	人鄙西	Unknown
Pai Ti	迪 裴	9th century
Po Chu yi	易居白	772-846
Seng Chiao-jan	然皎僧	Died 785
Shen Ch uan-ch i	期佺沈	Graduated about 680 died about 713
Ssu k ung Shu	曙空司	Flourished 766-779
Sung Chih wen	問之宋	Died 710
Tai Shu lun	倫叔戴	732-789
Ts en Ts an	參 岑	Graduated 744
Tsu Yung	詠 祖	Graduated 724
Ts uci Hao	灝 崔	Graduated 723 died 754
Ts uci Shu	曙 崔	Graduated in 738
Ts uci T'u	金 崔	Graduated 888
Tu Ch iu niang	娘秋杜	Early 9th century
Tu Fu	甫 杜	712-770
Tu Hsun he	鶴荀杜	Graduated 891 died about 904
Tu Mu	牧 杜	803-852
Tu Sien yen	言審杜	Between 7th and 8th centuries
Wang Ch ang ling	齡昌王	Graduated 726
Wang Chien	建 王	Graduated 775
Wang Chih huan	承之王	8th century

APPENDICES

<i>Names</i>		<i>Dates</i>
Wang Han	翰 王	Graduated about 735
Wang Po	勃 王	648-675
Wang Wan	灣 王	Graduated 712
Wang Wêi	維 王	699-759
Wêi Chuang	莊 韋	Graduated 902
Wêi Ying-wu	物應韋	773-828
Wên T'ing-yun	筠庭溫	9th century
Yuan Chên	稹 元	799-831
Yuan Chieh	結 元	719-772

TOPOGRAPHY

We have thought it best to substitute now and then in the text of the poems the modern names of places with an attempt at consistent spelling for the T'ang names used in the original some times we have indulged in English translations of the names but this index records the old names for scholars who may be interested It also locates in modern geography the towns lakes rivers mountains and roughly the larger regions for the possible interest of students and travellers We use however the suffix ou instead of ow Han kou Su-chou and Yang-chou instead of Hankow Soochow and Yangchow The T'ang capital often mentioned in these poems was Ch'ang an now Hsi an fu in Shen si Province Han was China and Fan the outside world The Three Kingdoms (220-264) were Shu now Sze-chuan Province Wu now Kiang su Province and other provinces in the Yangtze valley and Wei now Ho-nan Province and other provinces in the Huang ho valley

The T'ang names of regional divisions most important for readers of the poems are with approximate modern equivalents

Chin (Shan si Province)	Wéi (Ho nan Province)
Ch'in (Shen si Province)	Wu (Kiang su Province)
Chu (Hu nan Province)	Yen (Chih li Province)
Ping (Shan si Province)	Yu (Chih li Province)
Shu (Sze-chuan Province)	Yueh (Che liang Province)

General List

- Broken Mountain Temple (P'o-shan) in Ch'ang-shu district,
Kiang-su Province
- Ch'ang-an the T'ang capital, now Hsi-an-fu, in Shen-si Province
- Chang-chou a district in Fu-kien Province
- Ch'ang-chou a district in Kiang-su Province
- Chang-fêng-sha (Wind-swept Sands) in An-huêi Province
- Ch'ang-kan a small town near Nan-king
- Chang-sha: the capital of Hu-nan Province
- Chao a district in Chih-li Province
- Chêng a district in Ho-nan Province
- Ch'êng-tu (Ching-ch'êng, called the City of Silk) the capital of
Sze-chuan Province
- Chien-tê a town and a river in Chê-kiang Province
- Chin Shan-si Province
- Ch'in Shen-si Province
- Ching Gate (Ching-mên) at Ching-chou, in Hu-pêi Province
- Ch'in-huai River at Nan-king
- Ch'i-yang in Shen-si Province
- Ch'u Hu-nan Province
- Ch'u Mountains in Hu-nan Province
- Ch'u Rivers the Han and Hsiang Rivers in Hu-pêi and Hu-nan
Provinces
- Chuan-chiao Mountain in An-huêi Province
- Ch'u-chou a district in An-huêi Province
- Ch'u-li in Manchuria
- Chung-nan Mountain (Southernmost Mountain) fifteen miles
south of Ch'ang-an, one of the Nan-shan Range, in Shen-si
Province

TOPOGRAPHY

- Ch u t ang the first of the three great gorges on the upper Yang tsze also a district in Sze-chuan Province
- City of Silk Cheng tu in Sze-chuan Province
- Dagger River (Chien ho) the upper part of the Yang tsze in Sin kiang Province
- Dagger Tower Trail in Sze-chuan Province
- Dragon City (Lung-ch eng) in Manchuria
- Dragon Mound (Lung tui) in Turkestan
- Feng-chi Station in Sze-chuan Province
- Feng-chou a district in Kuang tung Province
- Feng hsiang a district in Shen si Province
- Fou liang a district in Kiang si Province
- Fu-chou a district in Shen si Province
- Fu li a district in An hui Province
- Giant s Palm (Hsien jen-chang) one of the peaks of Great Flower Mountain
- Great Flower Mountain (T'ai hua or Hua shan) in Shen si Province
- Great White Mountain (T ai po) in Sze-chuan Province
- Green Clay Mountain (Ch ing ni) in Sze-chuan Province
- Han China
- Han k ou (Hsia k ou) in Hu pei Province
- Han River joins the Yang tsze in Hu pei Province
- Han yang in Hu pei Province
- Heavenly Mother Mountain (T ien mu) a peak of the T ien t ai Mountains in Ché kiang Province
- Heavenly Terrace Range (T ien t ai) in Ché kiang Province
- Heaven Peak Road on T ien shan in Turkestan

- Hêng Mountain in Hu-nan Province, one of the Five Holy Mountains
- Hill of Gold (Chin-shan) between Mongolia and Manchuria
- Ho-lan Range in Kan-su Province, near Turkestan
- Hsia-kuêi a district in Shen-si Province
- Hsiang River in Hu-nan Province
- Hsiang-yang a district in Hu-pêi Province
- Hsiao River in Hu-nan Province
- Hsia-yung a district in Sze-chuan Province
- Hsi-yuan a district in Shen-si Province
- Hsuan-chou a district in An-huêi Province
- Hsun-yang River at Kiu-kiang
- Hua-chou a district in Shen-si Province
- Huai a district in Kiang-su Province
- Huai River a tributary of the Yang-tsze, in Kiang-su Province
- Hua-mên tribes Turkestanese
- Hua-yin the district under T'ai-hua (Great Flower Mountain) and around Hsien-yang, a local T'ang capital, in Shen-si Province
- Jade Pass (Yu-mên, Yu-kuan, or Yu-mên-kuan) a gateway or divide between China and Turkestan, now in the western part of Tun-huang district, Kan-su Province
- Jo-ya Lake in Chê-kiang Province
- Kiang-ling a district in Hu-pêi Province
- Kiu-kiang (Chiang-chou or Hsun-yang) in Kiang-si Province
- Kua-chou a town in Kiang-su Province, across the Yang-tsze from Chin-kiang
- Kuan-nêi within the Great Wall, in Shen-si Province
- Liang-chou a district in Kan-su Province

TOPOGRAPHY

- Liang-chuan unknown
- Liao near Mukden Manchuria
- Liao hsi a border-camp in Manchuria
- Li-chou Ferry unknown
- Liao-yang a district in Feng tien Province Manchuria
- Lien-chou a district in Kuang tung Province
- Li mien tribes Manchus
- Ling-chung a district in Sze-chuan Province
- Ling tao a district in Kan su Province
- Ling tao River between China and Tibet
- Ling Valleys in Shen si Province
- Ling ying a district in Ho-nan Province
- Liu-chou in Kuang si Province
- Lo yang a district in Ho-nan Province a principal city of the
Tang Dynasty formerly a capital of China
- Lo yu Tombs in Chang an (Hsi an fu) in Shen si Province
- Lu Dukedom near Tai shan in Shan tung Province
- Lu men near Hsiang yang in Hu pei Province
- Lu Mountain near Kiu kiang in Kiang si Province
- Ma wei Slope near Chang an (Hsi an fu) in Shen si Prov
ince
- Mao-ling in Hu nan Province
- Maple Bridge (Feng-chiao) in Su-chou Kiang su Province
- Meng Valley in Hu pei Province
- Mi lo River in Hu nan Province
- Mirror Lake (Ching hu) in Che kiang Province
- Nan king (Chin ling or Chien ye) in Kiang su Province
- Nan ling a district in An hui Province
- Nine Doubts Mountain (Chiu ni) in Hu nan Province

- Niu-chu Mountain on the Yang-tsze not far from An-king, in
An-huêi Province
- North Fort Hill (Pêi-ku) in Chin-kiang, Kiang-su Province
- O-mêi Mountain one hundred and seventy miles south-west of
Ch'êng-tu, in Sze-chuan Province
- Orchid Mountain (Lan-shan) in Kan-su Province
- Pa a district in Sze-chuan Province
- Pa-ling a district in Shen-si Province
- Pa Island in Hu-nan Province
- Parrot Island (Ying-wu-chou) near Han-kou, Hu-pêi Prov-
ince
- Pa-shang near Ch'ang-an (Hsi-an-fu), Shen-si Province
- P'en-p'u in Kiu-kiang, Kiang-si Province
- Persia Chiu-tzû
- Ping Shan-si Province
- Po-têng Road in Manchuria
- Po-ti (the City of the White God) in Sze-chuan Province
- Pu-kou in Kiang-su Province
- Red Phoenix City Ch'ang-an
- Running Horse River (Tsou-ma-ch'uan) in Manchuria
- Sand Mouth (Sha-k'ou) in Turkestan
- San-yuan (Yun-yang) a district in Shen-si Province
- Shan-yin a district in Chê-kiang Province
- Shin-fêng a place in Ch'ang-kan, also a district in Kiang-su
Province
- Shou-hsiang a border-city near Mount Hui-lo in Manchuria
- Shu Sze-chuan Province
- Siberia Lo-so
- Stone-Fish Lake (Shih-yü-hu) in An-huêi Province

- Su-chou (Ku su) in Kiang su Province
- Sung Mountain near Lo-yang in Ho-nan Province one of the
Five Holy Mountains
- Tai shan the Holy Mountain in Shan tung Province
- Tao-chou a district in Hu nan Province
- Ta yu Mountain between Kiang si and Kiang tung Provinces
- Terrace Tower a part of the Nan king city wall
- Tibet Yueh-chih
- Ting-chou a district in Fu kien Province
- Town of the Horse (Ma yi) in Turkestan
- Tripod Fall (Hsiang lu) one of the peaks of Lu Mountain
in Kiang si Province
- Tsou Realm near Tai shan in Shan tung Province
- Tsu-chou in Sze-chuan Province
- Tung Gate (Tung kuan) a gate or pass by the Tung River
in Shen si Province
- Tung lu River in An hui Province
- Tung ting Lake between Hu nan and Hu pei Provinces
- Turkestan (Tu-chueh) Sin kiang Province
- Wei Ho-nan Province
- Wei-cheng near Chang an (Hsi an fu) in Shen si Province
- Wei River in Shen si Province
- West Fort Mountain (Hsi sai) near Wu-chang in Hu pei
Province
- Wheel Tower (Lun tai) in Manchuria
- White Gate City Nan king
- White God City (Po-ti) in Sze-chuan Province
- White Wolf River (Pai lang ho) in Manchuria
- Wu Kiang su Province

- Wu-ch'ang (O-chou) a district by the Han River, now the capital of Hu-pêi Province
- Wu-chiang a district in Kiang-su Province
- Wu-chou Mountain in Chê-kiang Province
- Wu-chu Tribes Manchus
- Wu-hsing a district in Chê-kiang Province
- Wu-ling a district and a river in Hu-nan Province
- Wu Valley in Hsia-chou District, Sze-chuan Province
- Wang-ch'uan in Shen-si Province
- Yang-chou (Kuang-ling or Wêi-yang or Wu-chêng or Kiang-tu) a district and city in Kiang-su Province
- Yang Gate (Yang-kuan) south of the Jade Pass, between China and Turkestan, now in Kan-su Province
- Yang-tsze-kiang the great artery river between north and south China
- Yellow Dragon City (Huang-lung) in Manchuria
- Yellow River (Huang-ho) the second largest river, in north China
- Yen the part of Chih-li Province centering at Pe-king
- Yen-ch'êng in Ho-nan Province
- Yen-jan the boundary mountain between China and Manchuria
- Yen Mountain near Hsiang-yang, in Hu-pêi Province
- Yi-chou in Sze-chuan Province
- Yieh a district in Ho-nan Province
- Yien River in Chê-kiang Province
- Yin Mountains between Turkestan and Mongolia
- Ying-mên Mountain in Hu-pêi Province
- Yo-chou (Yueh-yang or Yueh-chou or Pa-ling) a district in Hu-nan Province
- Yu Chih-li Province

TOPOGRAPHY

Yu-ch'ien in Chekiang Province

Yu-chou in Chihli Province

Yueh Chekiang Province

Yun Valley in Hupei Province

Yung a district in Hunan Province

Yunyang (now San yuan) a district in Shensi Province

Yuyang (now Chihhsien) a district in Chihli Province

Yuyi a district in Anhui Province

NOTES ON THE POEMS

1 *The Day of No Fire* (The Chinese title is *Lines*) Chieh Chih-t'üü, a scholar and statesman of the Chin State toward the end of the Chou Dynasty, was disliked by the Duke Wên and exiled to the mountains. Later, trying to find him, but failing, the Duke had the forest set on fire to force him out, and Chieh Chih-t'üü was burned to death. The Duke, remorseful, ordered the people to mourn the dead man and always to commemorate him on this day, late in spring, by lighting no fires and eating only cold food. When the custom of the Day of No Fire had become fixed, fire of any sort was forbidden until night, and, as told in Han Hung's *After the Day of No Fire*, the Emperor would then send candles to his favourite officials, no others to be lighted before theirs.

1a The ancient Emperor Wang, who had lost his kingdom, in what is now Sze-chuan, entered at his death into a cuckoo, and his imperial spirit has cried for ever "Oh, to go back again!" The name "Emperor Wang," meaning "Emperor of Hope," came to be one of the names of the cuckoo. There is a direct allusion to this legend in Li Shang-yin's *The Inland Harp*.

2 In an old story by T'ao Ch'ien (A.D. 365-427), the Peach-Blossom River flows to the Utopian land, T'ao-yuan. It seems that long ago a fisherman from Wu-ling, fishing on the river, lost his

way and leaving his boat and walking along the bank found at its end a little cave. At first narrow and dark the cave opened presently into a wide and beautiful place where there were many people in the streets dressed in strange fashion. They asked the fisherman whence he came but they knew nothing of his country and age for their ancestors so they told him had fled from the disorders of the Ch'in Dynasty eight hundred years before and had never gone back again. They spoke an old tongue and read old books. They had no laws they paid no taxes. Everyone worked his own land and was happy in his own home. Family after family welcomed the fisherman and invited him to remain among them but he thought instead that he would come back later and so said good bye to them. He passed through the cave fixing the way well in his mind he returned home and reported his experience. But when officials of the Government asked him to guide them to Tao-yuan he could never find it again. (See Wang Wei's *A Song of the Peach Blossom River* for a poetic version of the narrative see also Pai Ti's *A Farewell to Tsuei*.)

2a Tao Chien the poet who first set down the story had been a magistrate at Pengtse and like Vice Prefect Liu to whom Tsuei Shu addresses *A Climb on the Mountain Holiday* an appreciator of wine and chrysanthemums. Wang Wei in *A Message from my Lodge* compares Pai Ti to him by a reference to Tao Chien's home Five Willows.

3 *She Sings an Old Song* (The Chinese title is *Ho man t'u* the name of the old Song.) According to Po Chu yi there was a singer of Tsang-chou in the Kai yuan period who condemned

to die, asked at the last moment to be allowed to sing this song, vainly hoping that it might win him clemency. His name became attached to the song. And it is known that later, in the Emperor Wên-tsung's time, Shên A-ch'iao, a palace-girl, was famous for singing it and dancing to it.

4 Lady Yang Kuê-fê, called in the original text of Chang Hu's poem *On the Terrace of Assembled Angels* T'ai chên (The Ever-True), was the T'ang Emperor Hsuan-tsung's famous favourite. The Ladies Kuo Kuo and Ch'in Kuo were her beautiful sisters. The Premier, mentioned with them in Tu Fu's *A Song of Fair Ladies*, was Yang Kuo-chung, avowedly their brother, but supposed to be even more tenderly interested in them, and likely, therefore, to resent their receiving bluebird messages (love-letters) from other admirers.

4a As told in Po Chu-yi's *A Song of Unending Sorrow*, Emperor Hsuan-tsung, known also as Ming Huang (Magnificent Monarch), was so enamoured of Lady Yang that he neglected his empire. His vassals revolted, and his armies refused to take orders. Forced to flee the capital, he escaped toward Sze-chuan with his lady and his officials, but even then his own body-guard protested that unless he gave her up, they would desert him. Finally they seized and slew her and officially announced that it had been by his own orders, whereupon the soldiers once more pledged loyalty to the dynasty. In Chêng T'ien's *On Ma-wêi Slope* it is told that they persuaded the Emperor to yield his lady by reminding him of the tragic fate of an earlier monarch, known as "The Later King of the Ch'ên Dynasty." This King also had become unpopular because of

a favourite. He had refused to give her up and when trouble followed had tied her to himself and hidden in a dry well at Ching yang Palace. The revolutionists had found them there and killed them. Further reference is made to this earlier Emperor and to *A Song of Courtyard Flowers* which he composed for his favourite in Tu Mu's *A Mooring on the Ch'in hui River* and Li Shang yin's *The Palace of the Sui Emperor*. Girls on the river at Nan king are still singing the song in flower boats and taverns.

This Emperor was overthrown by the Sui Emperor Yang ti who became the most luxurious and depraved of the Chinese emperors and exhausted the country for his indulgences. In winter for the trees of his garden he had leaves and flowers made of silk and birds were slaughtered broadcast that the palace cushions might be soft with only the finest down. (See Li Shang yin's *The Sui Palace*.) The end of the Sui Dynasty came with his overthrow by the founder of the Tang Dynasty called Peak of the Sun (Jih-chueh) Wang Wei in the last line of *Looking Down in a Spring Rain* contrasts a good emperor with Emperor Yang ti.

4b Among the incidents told of Emperor Hsuan tsung is the famous occasion when Li Po was called upon by the Emperor to compose a poem for Lady Yang. It was at the Feast of Peonies and the Emperor announced to the poet that he and his guests wished to hear not the old poems but a new one. Happily drunken the poet thereupon wrote the three stanzas called *A Song of Pure Happiness*. They were sung at once the Emperor himself playing the melody upon a jade lute. Another lyrical event is referred to in Po Chu yi's *A Song of Unending Sorrow*. The

Emperor Hsuan-tsung visited the moon in a dream and was taught there by Chang-o, the Goddess of the Moon, a dance-play called *The Rainbow Skirt and the Feathered Coat*. When he awoke, he remembered it, and, summoning his musicians and actors, the Pear-Garden Players, instructed them in the music and the steps. His beloved Lady Yang performed in the dance (See note 42)

4c There is in this collection one poem by the Emperor himself, *I Pass through Lu Dukedom with a Sigh and a Sacrifice for Confucius*, in which, remembering the dream that brought Confucius an omen of death, the Emperor wonders if he should feel a similar premonition as to his own fate

4d Tu Fu, in *A Song of Sobbing by the River*, laments the passing of the Emperor and of Lady Yang. The end of Hsuan-tsung's reign came about in the following manner. An Lu shan, son of a defeated Hun chieftain, had been captured in his youth, favoured by Hsuan-tsung, and adopted by Lady Yang, but, exiled later because of sedition, he aroused his people and led his bandit troops to the capture of the capital, Ch'ang-an. This was what caused the Emperor's unhappy flight, during which Lady Yang was killed. After An Lu-shan had reigned for a few months, he was murdered by his own adopted son, a Chinese, whereupon Ch'ang-an was recaptured by Chinese troops, and Su-tsung, son of Hsuan-tsung, was made Emperor. That this prince too had his troubles is told in Tu Fu's *A Song of a Prince Deposed*. Tu Fu, although loyal to the dynasty, tells in his poems *A Song of Sobbing* and *Taking Leave of Friends* how, during the troubles, he had fled the capital

and was subsequently transferred in punishment to a provincial post

Yuan Chen in his poem *The Summer Palace* speaks of court ladies long after Hsuan tsung's downfall remembering the brilliant and prosperous thirty years of his reign before the final ten years of infatuation with Lady Yang which brought about his ruin

5 It is believed that this Japanese priest may have been Kobo daishi who spent twenty years in China at Ch'ang-an University. Chinese was the only language in which was written the whole Buddhist teaching the light of which was the single lantern. Kobo-daishi returning home founded the great monastery on Koya-san and devised from Chinese characters the Japanese alphabet Kana.

The source meant China the superland in relation to Japan

5a The chant is specified in the original as Fan chanting in Sanskrit the faith as in the seventh line of Liu Chang-ching's *While Visiting the Taoist Priest Ch'ang on the South Stream* is the Ch'an doctrine. This Buddhistic doctrine of serenity brought by Ta-mo or Buddhidharma from India during the period of the Six Dynasties and later blent with Taoism was the Shingon Buddhism carried back by Kobo-daishi to Japan where it persists today blent with Zen Buddhism its principal seat still being the Monastery of Koya-san.

6 The term 'The Sun' or 'The Light of Heaven' is often used to mean the Emperor as well as 'The Son of Heaven' and 'The Ruler of Heaven'.

7 The Woman-Empress Wu-chiao (690-705) had established verse-writing as one of the requirements in the Government Examinations, through which as through western Civil Service, posts of state were conferred. This applicant, having failed to qualify with his verse, feels himself unworthy of the harpin of his family rank.

7a Commentators explain that on the eve of his final examination the subject of the poem by Chu Ch'ing-yu, possibly the poet, hopefully addresses a friend who has received the degree and is an expert in the subject. Elaborated metaphor of this kind, rare in the best poetry of the Tang period, became popular with later poets.

8 The phrase "Jade Dressing-Table" indicates a certain style of poem dealing with women.

The characters for this particular beetle and for good fortune have the same pronunciation, just as have the characters for bit and prosperity or the characters for deer and official Emolument.

The English term, "yoke," is used here as an inadequate equivalent of the original term, "washing-stone," which, though a familiar Chinese word for husband, would not be clear to a western reader.

9 In the Ch'u Kingdom of the Chou Dynasty there were many poets. One of them once wrote a poem and asked the others to "harmonize" it, which they did. Then he wrote another, to which the responses were fewer because it was more difficult. Then he followed with *The Song of Bright Spring*, which only two or three

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could harmonize The title has come to mean a song of the highest order

There are four ways of harmonizing a poem to sing of the same subject with any rhymes with the same rhyme sound but different words with the same rhyme words but in a different order or with the same rhyme words and in the same order

9a Chia Chih had written a poem on the Palace of Light and asked his friends to harmonize it (See the poems called *An Early Audience at the Palace of Light* by T'sen T'san and Wang Wei)

10 The sound of mallets on stone came from women washing goods to make winter clothes according to the custom still followed in China

11 The Purple Hills was a name for paradise

12 Dragon beard was a kind of finely woven bamboo matting

13 Han Yü for opposing Buddhism was exiled by Emperor Hsien tsung The Emperor had sent envoys to India to import Buddhistic doctrines and was preparing a great ceremony to receive a relic a bone of the Buddha when Han Yu protesting against the introduction of a religion unsuited to China remarked that whatever virtue there had been in Buddha there could be none in his bone which besides might be really that of a dog or a sheep The Emperor angrily exiled the protestant

On another occasion Han Yu, secretary to the Emperor's Premier, P'ai Tu, wrote an account of the conquering of the Huai-hsi rebels (see Li Shang-yin's *The Han Monument*). This writing was inscribed on stone as a monument of the victory, but afterward, owing to personal jealousy, the monument was cast down and an inferior inscription set in its place (See Tu Fu's *A Letter to Censor Han*)

13a Divinity-cups are still used at temples for telling fortunes. Two small cups, originally of jade, now of wood, are thrown on the ground. The inquirer, kneeling before the altar, is told his lot according to their position and aspect

14 There are five sacred peaks in China Hêng-shan, the Nan-yueh, near Hêng-chou in Hu-nan Province (see Han-yu's *Stopping at a Temple on Hêng Mountain*), is the southernmost of them Hua-shan, or Tai-hua (the Great Flower), the Hsi-yueh (see Hsu Hun's *Inscribed in the Inn at T'ung Gate* and Ts'uên Hao's *Passing through Hua-yin*), is in Shen-si Province and is the westernmost. To westerners the best-known of these mountains is the easternmost, Tai-shan (the Great Peak), the Tung-yueh near T'ai-an in Shan-tung Province (see Tu Fu's *A View of Tai-shan*). The other two of the sacred peaks are Sung-shan, the Chung-yueh, the midmost of them, near Lo-yang in Ho-nan Province, and a second Hêng-shan, the Pei-yueh, the northernmost, near Hun-yuan in Shan-si Province

On these five mountains (see Han-yu's *Stopping at a Temple*), were conferred titles ranking with those of the Three Dukes, the highest in the Empire.

14a The Purple Canopy Celestial Column Stone Granary and Fire God are four mountain peaks around Heng shan the Holy Mountain in Hu nan Province

15 Among the oldest known stone-carvings of the Chinese these ten stone drums were made and engraved with poems under the Emperor Hsuan of the Chou Dynasty Three of them still exist and are now in the Confucian Temple at Peking together with replicas of the other seven

16 The writings of Wang Hsi chih even in his own time were very valuable but he would not sell them except in exchange for a few white geese of which he was extremely fond

17 There is a popular anonymous parody of this poem made by changing only two or three characters mocking a husband who on a trip to the city had abandoned his moustache

I left home old I return young
Speaking as then but with no hair on my lip
And my goodwife meeting me does not know me
She smiles and says Little boy where do you come from?

18 The last two lines are reminiscent of a poem by Sung Yu of the Chou Dynasty (300 B C) which concludes

• A single leaf blown from a lakka tree
Whispers autumn through the world

19 Tsou was a dukedom within the Lu Realm in what is now Shan tung

During the Han Dynasty the Lu Duke, breaking down the walls of his palace and finding ancient writings, recognized it as the former abode of Confucius and therefore transformed it into a temple

19a In the *Analects* Confucius said "When the phœnix no longer comes, it will mean the end of my fortunes" When a dead *ch'i-lin*, akin to a unicorn, was brought to him by official hunters for identification, he recognized it as the creature which was wont to appear for greeting during a successful reign, but he grieved that this time its coming had meant its death He wrote a poem to it

Unicorn and phœnix came once to happy kings
What made you come at the wrong time, only to die?
Unicorn, unicorn, my heart is full of pity

A few days before he died, he told his disciples that he had foreseen his end in a dream, in which he had found himself at a large temple, witness of a sacrificial ceremony being conducted between two pillars, and he wrote this poem about it

Alas, is this the crumbling of T'ai-shan?
Alas, is this the rotting of the beam?
Alas, is this the wise man's withering?

20 She weaves like the Lady Su Huêi, who embroidered the famous eight-hundred-character anagram, from which have been discovered already, as told in Dr Kiang's Introduction, several hundred rhyming poems

21 Wu Valley in the Hsia-chung district Sze-chuan Province is the destination of one friend and Heng Mountain near Chang sha in Hu nan Province is the destination of the other

Dew from Heaven in the original text refers to the Emperor's favour

22 The Yen Song was a musical song of the northern border

The Great Chief Chan yu was the title of the King of the Tartars who invaded China

Li Mu of the Chao State in Chou Dynasty had killed more than ten thousand Tartars so that for a decade after there had been no more invaders

23 Tsai Yen called also Tsai Wen-chi daughter of a famous scholar of the later Han Dynasty was captured by Tartars and made the wife of their chieftain She expressed her grief in a melody of eighteen stanzas on a barbarian musical instrument *hu-chia*

Musical notes in China still have the old names The *shang* the *chueh* and the *yu* are the second third and fifth of the total five

24 Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty for the purpose of introducing grape vines into China had tried to conquer central Asia

25 The Chinese or Han Princess Wang Chao-chun the Lady of Light was a beautiful court lady living at the palace of Emperor Cheng Since there were too many girls there for the Emperor to select from except by portrait Mao Yen shou made all their

likenesses, painting them favourably or unfavourably according to the size of their bribes. The Lady Wang, failing to bribe, was made to look unsightly. And, when a chieftain of the Huns sent envoys to the Emperor, offering to submit to the Han Dynasty if he might marry into the imperial family, the Emperor chose, among those whom he did not desire, Wang Ch'ao-chun and sent her word asking whether she would like to go. She agreed, preferring, say some, to be the wife of the Hun rather than obscure in the Han palace. At the farewell feast Emperor Ch'êng found her, unlike her portrait, very beautiful. But it was too late, he had given his word to the envoys. So she married the Hun chieftain. When she died, she was buried, as she had requested, alongside the Chinese boundary, close to the Great Wall. And where she lies, the grass, which everywhere else on the Hun side is yellow, is as green as it is on the Chinese side. Po Chu-yi has a poem on *The Exiled Lady Wang Ch'ao-chun*.

Let the envoy, going back to China, say this.
 Her heart is timing the day of return,
 And yet, should the Emperor wish to be told,
 This foreign sunlight is good for her beauty.

A play about her by Wang Shih-fu has been translated into English by Sir John Davis under the title *The Sorrow of Han*.

Lady Wang wrote the words and music of an eighteen-stanza song and used to play it on her guitar (*p'i-p'a*). When in Chinese paintings a woman is seen playing a guitar on horseback, it is she.

See Tu Fu's *Thoughts of Old Time*. In this volume it consists of only two of five poems he wrote under the one title, which is, more literally, *Pondering on Old Ruins*.

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26 Wu Mountain was the abode of nymphs and fairies. It is told that a supernally beautiful fairy appeared once in a dream to King Hsiang of Ch'u and to his entreaties answered only that she was morning-cloud and evening rain upon the hills of Wu. Cloud and rain has come to be in Chinese a phrase indicating passionate love.

26a Flying Swallow Chao Fei yen originally a singing girl and a famous beauty became a favourite of Emperor Cheng of the Han Dynasty in the first century B.C. As remembered in Tu Mu's *Confession* this lady was supposed to be so exquisitely slender that she could dance on the palm of the hand.

27 Mr. Ezra Pound in his *Cathay* translating this and other poems by Li Po misled readers for a period by using the Japanese name Rihoku. The reason for this would appear to be that Mr. Pound discovered the poems among the papers of Fenellosa and finding the name as set down by some Japanese scholar did not recognize the poet as the great Li Po. Other translators have used the name Li T'ai po. Li was his family name. Po his given name and T'ai po his social name.

28 Yang-chou called in Li Po's poem Kuang ling at the southern end of the Grand Canal was in T'ang times a rich and luxurious city of which it was said

Happy is he who has a million
And can ride on the stork back to Yang-chou

It was a gala resort for the wealthy and distinguished

28a The Yellow Crane Terrace was a famous building on a terrace by the Yang-tsze at Wu-chang, Hu-p'ei Province. (The Chinese word for it means literally a building of more than one story, a word for which we do not find an equivalent in English)

Wang Tzŭ-ch'iao, attaining immortality six hundred years before Christ, is said to have flown up to heaven at this spot on the back of a yellow crane. The building commemorated the event Li Po once came to it and wished to inscribe a poem, but finding Ts'uêi Hao's poem on the wall, wrote the following lines

Let my fist break down the Yellow Crane Terrace
And my foot kick over Parrot Isle,
Whose loveliness but finds me dumb —
With Ts'uêi Hao's poem above my head.

29 This poem is an example of what the Chinese call one-current-of-air poetry, *yi-ch'í-ho-ch'êng*

30 General Hsieh Shang of the Chin Dynasty was Commander of the Guard in the region about Niu-chu. He was also a literary man and a poet. One moonlight evening he heard somebody reading poetry in a small boat. On inquiry, he found that it was Yuan Hung, a very young poet, reading from his own works. The general sent for him and praised him highly. Yuan Hung afterwards became well known. Near here, according to some of his friends, Li Po was drowned while trying to embrace a reflection of the moon, and it is possible that this was his last poem.

31 The poet had evidently been sent away from Ch'ang-an, the capital

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32 Li po as well as Wang Wei Meng Hao-jan Tsu Yung and others of the T'ang poets seems to have enjoyed the region around Chung nan Mountain fifteen miles south of the capital Ch'ang an in Shen si Province

32a The Emperor upon reading Meng's poem about Chung nan was indignant and declared that the famous poet had not been dismissed but as Li Po declares in *A Message to Meng Hao-jan* had left service of his own accord

33 The post and the tower of silent watching refer to two stories This is one of the stories A young man once waited for a girl by a certain post under a bridge She was delayed Rather than leave the appointed spot he clung to the post and was drowned by the rising tide The girl arriving late and seeing the fate of her lover killed herself This is the other story Two young people deeply in love were married After much happiness the husband felt impelled to become a recluse Sadly but resolutely he went away to a mountain side and established his retreat His wife then built a high tower in the top of which she lived for many long years her gaze ever fixed towards the mountain and her hermit

34 The madman was Chieh yu a Ch'u Kingdom recluse famous for drinking but more for stopping Confucius's chariot and warning him against politics with the song

O phoenix O phoenix
Virtue is corrupted!
What is past is past all counsel

What is future may be moulded, —
 But come away, come away,
 Politics are dangerous!

Wang Wêi, in the original of the next to the last line of *A Message from my Lodge*, refers to P'ai T'i as Chieh-yu

The Stone Mirror a peak near Lu Mountain

34a Hsieh Ling-yun a famous scholar of the Chin Dynasty (see Li Po's *T'ien-mu Mountain*)

"The immortal pellet" was a drug made by Taoist alchemists and supposed to confer immortality "The lute's third playing" refers to the fact that there were usually three stanzas in a song

The Jade City the capital of heaven

Saint Lu-ao had been mentioned by Chuang-tzŭ as ascending into heaven

35 This villa at Hsuan-chou, in what is now An-huêi Province, was named after Hsieh T'iao, a famous writer of the Chin Dynasty who was known as the Lesser Hsieh because he was the nephew of the still more famous writer of the same surname, Hsieh Ling-yun, known as the Great Hsieh Li Po, in high compliment, compares himself to Secretary Shu-yun as the Lesser Hsieh to the Great Hsieh (See Li Po's *Lu Mountain* and *T'ien Mu Mountain*)

"The bones of great writers" carries in the original a specific reference to Chien-an, a celebrated period of letters during the Wêi Dynasty of the Three Kingdoms.

36 The road Li Po is describing runs from Shen-si Province (Ch'in) to Sze-chuan Province (Shu) In the original text the two

NOTES ON THE POEMS

I

early rulers are named Tsan tsung and Yu fu both of the legendary ages

The City of Silk Cheng tu the capital of Sze-chuan Province

37 She was in Chang an the T'ang capital and he near Yen jan a boundary mountain She has set down her harp from Chao (Chih li Province) and significantly taken up her Sze-chuan lute with its strings in attuned pairs

38 The master Ts'ên refers to the poet Ts'ên Ts'an and the scholar Tan Ch'iu to a Taoist hermit of the early T'ang period whose real name was unknown

Prince Ch'en was Ts'ao Chih of the Wei Dynasty in the Three Kingdoms period

The translation flower-dappled horse simplifies a comparison in the original to the five flowered coin a comparison which though familiar and quick to the Chinese imagination would for a Westerner impede the rush of the poem (See Ts'ên Ts'an *A Song of Running Horse River*)

39 The poet according to Chinese custom means himself when in the original he names someone well known to whose lot or experience his own may be likened Ssu ma Hsiang yü of the Han Dynasty a famous scholar was the guest of Prince Liang but later retired and died in Mao-ling The story is told that invited to the house of a rich man Cho Wang sun Hsiang yü with a lute sang so beautifully his poem *The Phoenix in Search of his Mate* that Wen-chun Cho Wang sun's nineteen year-old widowed daughter fell in love with him Rapt in wine he sang with his

lute another song, asking her to clope. She did. Having no money, they opened and conducted a small wine-house; and though the father, through family pride, bade them come home, the poet refused. The resort was so obscure that the Emperor Ch'êng, who liked his poetry, could not find him. But the Empress, unloved, discovered him and persuaded him with a bribe to write a poem with which she could regain imperial favour. This poem, which was read to the Emperor as hers, causing him to love her again, is a long one and still extant.

39a Carp in the river and wildgeese or bluebirds in the sky were the classical messengers of love, or of friendship. In one of the Nineteen Ancient Poems, the poet tells how he was brought some carp by a boy and, cutting one of them open, found in its belly a letter from his beloved, declaring her love and wishing him happiness.

40 Only officials above the third rank in the T'ang Dynasty wore the decoration of the Golden Tortoise.

41 It was believed that paradise, with its Jade Pool, lay to the west of China and that there stood also the palace of Hsi-wang-mu, the Royal Mother of the West. Stories are frequent, in Chinese and Japanese literature and art, of emperors trying to communicate with her kingdom. Emperor Mu of the Chou Dynasty had eight horses, able to cover ten thousand miles in a day. Driving them west, he reached the kingdom and found the goddess. But he never returned. And *The Yellow Bamboo Song* was composed as a mourning-song for him and his followers, all but a few of whom died on the way.

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42 In ancient stories King Yi was cruel to his wife Chang-o. Planning to escape him she stole from heaven a miraculous potion by means of which she might flee away and be safe. When she had drunk the potion she began to run very fast and could not stop. Finally she entered the moon and was unable to find her way out. So she remained there and became its goddess, her husband becoming in his turn God of the Sun. (See notes 4b and 91.)

43 When only twenty four years old Chia Yi, a statesman and man of letters, sent a ten thousand word memorial offering his political views and plans for reform to Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty. The period was prosperous and the Emperor though not warm hearted was a just ruler. But Chia Yi was sensitive and had fears for the future. Everyone thought him crazy. Even the Emperor considered him a visionary whose dreams were of no value and sent him as a petty official to Chang sha, now capital of Hunan Province, but at that time an out-of-the-way place where he died. After thirty or forty years his prophecies came true and he was remembered. While at Chang sha he acted as tutor to a prince, as mentioned in Liu Chang-ching's *New Year's*. Near the Hsiang River Chia Yi had written a poem eulogizing Chu Yuan, the famous poet who in exile had drowned himself there. In the same locality Liu Chang-ching also in exile wrote *On Passing Chia Yi's House in Chang sha*. The same poet's *A Poem Sent to Governor Yuan* intimates that Liu Chang-ching in exile was as meritorious as Chia Yi.

44 It was a poetical belief that the cicada was the purest member of the insect world and lived only upon dew. Its advice to Li

Shang-yin is rather to die nobly of hunger at home with his family than to lead an ignoble and uncertain official life

45 *The Precious Dagger* was a long poem by Kuo Yuan-chén sent to the T'ang Woman-Emperor, Wu-Chao (See note 7) The theme of the poem was that a good scholar is like a precious dagger. The poet was summoned to become her attendant. During the fifty years of her successful reign, akin in more ways than one to the reign of Queen Elizabeth in England, Tibet was conquered, and part of Turkestan.

45a The Blue Houses are the quarters of the dancing-girls

46 Chuang-tzū, dreaming once that he had been transformed into a butterfly, awoke to find the butterfly gone and his own body on the bed. He said "I do not know which is my real self, this or the butterfly." Another story is told of him. Walking with his friend Huċi-tzū, he saw some fish in the water and said "How happy they are!" Huċi answered "You are not a fish, how do you know they are happy?" And Chuang retorted "You are not I. How do you know I do not know that they are happy?"

The tears of merfolk were supposed to become pearls. It was believed that in the fields of paradise grew only jewels and jade, which, under the sun's heat, would give off their colours in mist.

47 *Nameless Lines* are always love-poems, the designation having become a custom. We translate the title *To One Unnamed*.

48 In the original seventh line, Liu is named in the poet's place. Liu went once to a mountain, met a nymph there, and was enter-

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tained but coming away lost his direction and never found it again like the famous fisherman from Wu ling who lost his way to the Peach Blossom Country

It was supposed that a lock decorated with a golden toad was thereby made secure

The jade tiger was a marker on a well rope gauging the water's depth

Lady Chia the daughter of a premier of the Chin Dynasty and specified in the original text fell in love with her father's young secretary Han Shou and finally married him in spite of his low rank. Her father recognizing on Han Shou's clothes a particular scent used by his daughter could not withhold his approval of the marriage

Prince Wei also specified in the original met on the Lo River a fairy Lady Mi who gave him a bridal mat and disappeared. He wrote about the episode a long and beautiful account in rhythmic prose

49 General Chu ke Liang called also Kung ming is a familiar figure in these poems. He was a celebrated general scholar and statesman in the period of the Three Kingdoms who as Premier advised and served the founder of the Shu Kingdom Emperor Liu Pei restored rebellious lands and in later times was honoured and worshipped by the people (See Tu Fu's *A Song of an Old Cypress*, *The Temple of the Premier of Shu* and *Thoughts of Old Time II*)

49a The Eight Sided Fortress (*pa-chen tu*) was built on Chu ke Liang's plan of the eight diagrams beside the Upper Yangtze in Sze-chuan. He advised his Emperor campaigning against the

other two kingdoms, to master the Wêi Kingdom first, but the Emperor, rejecting his advice, attacked first the Wu Kingdom and was defeated. (See note 52a)

49b Emperor Liu Pêi, before his accession, went twice to Chu-kê Liang's hut for counsel and was refused, but the third time, when the Emperor knelt by the bed and said "Not for my sake, but for the sake of my people, assist me," Chu-kê Liang consented. He remained Premier into the reign of the succeeding Emperor. Finally, as general, he planned a victory which his death prevented.

Historians regard Emperor Liu Pêi, founder of the Shu Kingdom, as carrying on the Han Dynasty against two usurpers in the other two of the Three Kingdoms, Shu, Wu, and Wêi, which in Liu Yu-hsi's poem *The Temple of the First King of Shu* are likened to a three-legged pot. The same poem refers to the fact that in the other kingdoms the five-pennyweight coin was given less than its proper weight. The "great premier" in this poem was the famous Chu-kê Liang.

49c The Later Emperor of the Shu Kingdom, the second whom Chu-kê Liang served and advised, was defeated and captured after the Premier's death.

The Liang-fu Song (Song of the Holy Mountain) concerning one of the peaks of Tai-shan, had been written by Chu-kê Liang while he was still a hermit, and before he yielded to the Emperor's third request for assistance.

49d¹ In Tu Fu's *Night in the Watch-Tower*, Chu-kê Liang is referred to as "Sleeping Dragon," and Kung-sun Shu, another Han general, as "Plunging Horse."

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50 Kuan and Yuch specified in the original were statesmen of the Chou Dynasty Kuan and Chang also specified two great generals in the Shu Kingdom were both killed in action the first of them Kuan Yu has been made the Chinese god of war called also Kuan Ti

51 The *Canons of Yao and Hsun* were two volumes in the Confucian Book of History *Ching miao* and *Sheng min* two poems in the Confucian Book of Poetry and the T'ang plate and Confucian tripod two art treasures

The three Huang rulers and five Ti rulers were famous as good sovereigns of ancient China

52 Chou Yu a hero of the period of the Three Kingdoms young handsome a statesman a general a scholar a musician was fond of listening to classical music and when a mistake would be made is said to have reminded the player with a glance The listener here is of course not Chou Yu but one whose eye the harpist likes to attract and probably also a connoisseur of music

52a In Tu Mu's *The Purple Cliff* (a cliff on the Yang tsze east of Han kou Hupei Province) allusion is made to a celebrated event occurring there an exploit of Chou Yu's A fleet from the Wei Kingdom had come down the river to attack the Wu and Shu Kingdoms The two generals Chu ke Liang of the Shu Kingdom and Chou Yu of the Wu Kingdom combined forces and destroyed the fleet by setting it afire The King of Wei if he had won this battle would have been able to bear captive to his Copper Bird Palace the two famously beautiful girls of Chiao

one of them the wife of the King of Wu and the other the wife of General Chou Yu. These girls are celebrated in Chinese poetry, like Helen of Troy in European poetry, as a romantic source of war. In Tu Fu's poem *The Eight-Sided Fortress*, is sung Chu-kê Liang's grief that he had not conquered the Wu Kingdom, yet here are seen the Wu and Shu Kingdoms allied against the Wên Kingdom. Changes in the military alignment of Chinese war-lords have always been rapid.

53 This temple, in Yang-chou, Kiang-su Province, was on a terrace erected by General Wu of the Ch'ên Dynasty and was named after him.

The river is the Yang-tsze

54 In the original text of Liu Chang-ch'ing's *On Leaving Ku-k'iang* the familiar poetical term "Green-Wave Islands" is used for Ch'ang-an, the capital, from which he had been previously exiled because of a storm he had aroused by too freely expressing his own ideas.

In the original of Shên Ch'uan-ch'i's *Beyond Seeing*, the capital, is called "The City of the Red Phoenix", and in Wang Wên's *To Chi-wu Ch'ien*, "The Gate of Gold"

55 The fellow-official sent to Lien-chou was Liu Yu-hsi, the poet

56 The clans of Wang and Shieh, specified in the original, had been prominent in Nan-king. They had lived on Blacktail Row, which, decaying in the superseded capital, was now left to the swallows and the poor.

NOTES ON THE POEMS

57 In the period of the Three Kingdoms the Yang tze River was fortified with chains to defend Nan king capital of the Wu Kingdom. But Wang Chun of the Chin Dynasty building high storied war ships brought them down from Sze-chuan managed to cut to pieces the iron chains at the mouth of the river, and so captured the city.

58 The original text of the second line reads "Sings me what I am thinking under my southern cap." A prisoner from the south would wear all of the northern prison garb but keep his own cap to remember his own land. And the phrase "southern cap" has come to symbolize a political prisoner with the implication that he maintains his ideas. This prisoner for instance cannot make his pure thoughts heard by the Emperor through the noise of the confused world.

59 Li Kuang of the Han Dynasty an eminent general against the Tartars shot one night at a black tiger and next morning found that the point of his arrow was stuck in a solid piece of rock. There is brief reference to him in Wang Wei's *Song of an Old General*. In Wang Chang ling's *Over the Border* he is called "The Winged General" (See note 111.)

60 There was a myth that when the two sisters O Huang and Nu yin wives of the dead Emperor Shun had finished their period of mourning they became Queens of the Clouds. Lake Tung ting is the only place from which comes a certain spotted bamboo popular with both Chinese and Japanese for its decorative effect. The spots were made by the Queens' tears.

APPENDICES

61 Yang Hu of the Chin Dynasty, a governor stationed at Hsiang yang, now in Hu-pêi Province, was famous as scholar, statesman and general and was much loved by the people. After his death a monument was erected on the Yen Mountain and inscribed with his deeds and was visited by so many mourners that it was called the Monument of Tears.

62 The bluebird, a messenger of the affections, summoned him to the house of his friend, whom he likens to the Han Dynasty Genie of the Red Pine (See note 89.)

62a Taoists were often alchemists, with crucibles and potions. Wêi Ying-wu in his *Poem to a Taoist Hermit* speaks of his friend "boiling white stones" to be eaten thereafter like potatoes.

63 The original second line reads "If I had enough for the Three Paths." The Three Paths indicated a hermit's hut, one to the front door, one to the back door, and one around the house.

In ancient alchemy it was believed that the flame of cinnamon-wood consumed gold.

64 In Mêng Hao-jan's poem the phrase used for the Mountain Holiday, a day on which everyone goes mountain-climbing for seeing the view, drinking wine, and writing poems, is the Feast of the Two Nines, the ninth day of the ninth month. In Wang Wêi's *On the Mountain Holiday* reference is made to the custom of each climber's carrying a spray of dogwood. Ts'uên Shu also has a poem concerning this festival.

NOTES ON THE POEMS

65 The ancient hermitage is specified as that of Pang a hermit who lived on Lu men Mountain during the Han Dynasty but the hermitage meant is probably Meng's own

66 The Great Dipper is compared to He shu the famous Tang general who conquered Tibet between which and China ran the Ling tao River

67 One of the palace luxuries was a pillow under which charcoal and incense were arranged for fragrant warmth

68 Wang Sun a name akin to the English Prince Charming but more serious and translated here Prince of Friends means a noble hearted young scholar or sometimes lover (See Wang Wei's *A Parting* and *An Autumn Evening in the Mountains*)

There was an old song

The wild grass loves Wang Sun
And he the grasses
And when he rides away,
They call to him

69 The places mentioned in Po Chuyi's note were widely separate in Shan si Ho-nan An hui and Kiang si Provinces

70 Li Yen nien of the Han Dynasty had said of an earlier beauty than Yang Kuei fei

One glance and she could shatter down a city
A second she could tip an empire over

APPENDICES

71 The instrument translated "guitar" was a *p'i-p'a*, like the Japanese *biwa*, as in Tu Fu's *Thoughts of Old Time, I* (See note 25)

72 Sêng, the poet's name, is a variant of Sanka, given as a family name to Buddhist priests

73 Between Kiang-si and Kuang-tung, even the wildgeese find the Ta-yu (Great Granary) Mountains too high to cross

Plum-blossoms have not yet opened farther north, but there are plenty in the warm south beyond this mountain

74 The morning bell, tokening here the separation of friends, was a popular subject among poets as a symbol of finality. For instance, the Chinese spring, beginning on the first day of the First-month, corresponding to early February, ends on the thirtieth day of the Third-month, in our May, and its definite close is sung by Chia Tao in the latter two lines of a four-line poem called *The Thirtieth Day of the Third-Month*

I shall lie and share with you, awake,
The last of spring, till the morning bell

75 "The Way" (Tao) is the Way of the Universe, the Flow of Unison. It is the essence of Taoism

At the age of thirty-one, when his wife died, Wang Wên left his post as Assistant-Secretary of State and, as told in his poem *My Retreat at Chung-nan*, came to live by Mount Chung-nan, turning his heart to the teachings of Lao-tzŭ

NOTES ON THE POEMS

75a Lao-tzu the founder and teacher of Taoism despairing of mankind's acceptance of the Way rode westward on a dun-coloured cow and disappeared for ever in the desert wilderness. At the wall however the guard of the gate of whom nothing is known but his name Yin hsi stopped the aged saint and kept him overnight at the border to set down his principles. The result was the famous mystical book *Tao-te-ching*. Tao being the Way and Te the exemplification of the mystical philosophy (See Ts'uei shu's *A Climb on the Mountain Holiday* and Liu Chang-ching's *While Visiting a Taoist Priest*.)

76 The Green Books Chinese official history

77 The references in the last two lines are to two youths of the Han Dynasty. The first Pan Chao in his boyhood a copyist threw his writing brush to the ground one day and exclaimed "I will join the army and fight the Huns!" He became later a famous and successful general. The other Chung Chun going to the border to fight the Huns took off his student cap at the gate and demanded in exchange a lariat with which he captured Hun chieftains.

78 Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty having trouble with the meaning of Lao-tzu's book sent for the Old Magician of the River Bank of whose wisdom he had heard. The wizard answered "If the Emperor asked something else I would go to him. But if he asks the meaning of Tao and Te he should come to me." Whereupon the Emperor visited him and referred to the Confucian Book of Poems in which it says that every being within

the Empire is subject to the emperor. The old man raised himself to the middle of the sky and answered "Above I do not touch heaven, nor in the centre man, nor below earth. To whom am I subject?" The Emperor bowed and asked him other questions, but the wizard, dropping him a volume, a commentary on the *Tao-tê-ching*, vanished. Later, to commemorate the event, the Emperor built on the spot this Terrace Whence One Sees the Magician (*Wang-Hsien-T'ai*).

79 Tu Ch'iu-niang was a singing-girl, the only woman poet in this anthology.

80 This famous performer, Li Kuêi-nien, was court-musician to Emperor Hsuan-tsung.

81 Ch'ü Yuan, author of *The Songs of Ch'ü*, the first rhythmic prose in Chinese, had drowned himself in the Mi-lo River.

82 In the original text, Premier Fang Kuan is indirectly meant by a direct allusion to Premier Hsieh An of the Chin Dynasty, famously fond of chess. Fang is likened also to Lord Hsu, in reference to the following story. Prince Chi-cha of the Chou Dynasty had a very fine dagger, and he knew that Lord Hsu, through whose lands he was passing, coveted it and would not ask for it. The Prince was travelling and could not be without it. When he returned from his journey, Lord Hsu was dead, and Chi-cha, visiting the tomb, hung on a tree there the coveted dagger.

NOTES ON THE POEMS

83 Hearing that the bandits have been dispersed in Northern Chi (Chih li Province) the poet sets out from Chien Station in Sze chuan and passing in that province the two mountains Pa hsia and Wu hsia, he reaches Hsiang yang in Hu pei Province on his way home to Lo-yang in Ho-nan Province. These names in the original text are used in effective succession.

84 For a literal translation of this poem character by character see Dr. Kiang's Introduction.

85 Yi and Lu were celebrated early statesmen and in the following line of the original text Hsiao and Tsao were also specified the greatest statesmen of the Han Dynasty.

86 Lao-tzu had said in the *Tao te-ching* "The heavenly net is broad. It is loose but never loses."

87 The late Emperor was Hsuan tsung and the Kuos the family of the famous general Kuo Tzu yi. (See notes 4 and 4a b c d.) Tai tsung was the grandfather of Hsuan tsung.

One of the lines from this poem "The high clear glance the deep firm breath" is a phrase frequently quoted as applying to superior literature and brushmanship.

Secretary Wei Feng was himself a painter as of course was Prince Chiang tu and Chih Tun was a famous horse painter of the Chun Dynasty.

88 Lady Wei was tutor of Wang Hsi-chih who was a sage of the brush. (See note 16.)

The emperor referred to was Hsuan-tsung

The origin of the line in which we use the phrase "founders of this dynasty" contains the names of the Princes Pao and Ê, two great generals who helped found the T'ang Dynasty, and in the later line in which we use the phrase "even the finest are deprived of their spirit," the original text specified Hua and Liu, two celebrated horses

Han Kan's horse-paintings are much admired to this day

89 "Unicorn" is the best translation we can make of the sacred animal, *ch'i-ling*. (See note 19a)

The southern rivers are specified in the original as the Hsiao and Hsiang, which are in Hu-nan Province

Of the Wizard of the Red Pine we have said "After his earlier follower he has now a new disciple" Tu Fu's text reads "He has a new disciple, a very Chang Liang" Chang Liang was a great statesman, especially known as a wise adviser to the founder of the Han Dynasty After Emperor Kao-tzu succeeded in unifying China, Chang Liang retired and followed his Taoist tutor, the Wizard of the Red Pine, and disappeared Using a common convention in Chinese poetry, Tu Fu names Chang Liang, but means Censor Han, whose merit and case are comparable

90 This was the temple of Chu-kê Liang (See notes 49 and 49a, b, c, d) The temple stood outside the city of Ch'êng-tu, the capital of Sze-chuan

The poem intimates that in the reconstruction of a country strong statesmen are needed, but that it is difficult to enlist and direct their strength

NOTES ON THE POEMS

91 Grassy writing is familiarly and improperly referred to as the running handwriting the same Chinese character meaning grass and draught

In Chinese mythology Yi the famous archer shot down from the sky nine of the ten suns and became afterward king of the one sun left his wife Chang o becoming Queen of the Moon (See Li Shang yin's *To the Moon Goddess* also notes 4b and 42)

The Pear-Garden Players were the imperial troupe of actors at the court of Emperor Hsuan tsung (See note 4b)

9 The deposed Prince may have been Su tsung (See note 4d)

The crow especially the white headed is a bird of ill omen

The final line means that the spirits of the five emperors of the T'ang Dynasty are befriending the deposed Prince

93 The term Spring Palace is still used in China to connote venery

94 The Chao Tomb specified in the original was the tomb of Emperor Tai tsung the second ruler of the T'ang Dynasty and the most illustrious

95 In the original the river region is specified as Chiang nan the region along the lower Yang tsze

• There is still a place in Yang-chou called Twenty Four Bridges It probably meant arches

96 In the original the two stars are named — the Cowherd and the Spinning girl (Ch'ien niu and Chih nu) the reference being

to a well-known story, the conclusion of which is that two sweet-hearts, having been changed into stars, are able to see each other across the Milky Way, but are allowed to meet only once a year, on the seventh night of the Seventh-month Lafcadio Hearn has translated from the Japanese a long poem on this subject

97 The man who owned this garden, Shih Ch'ung of the Chin Dynasty, was the richest man of his time The last line of this poem alludes to one of many stories about him A certain general coveted a favourite of his, a girl named Lu-chu, whom Shih Ch'ung refused to surrender Presently the general, charging him with treason, sent troops to seize Lu-chu She shut herself in her high chamber, and when they took Shih Ch'ung, she threw herself from the window to her death

98 It was a poetical belief that the call of the wildgoose came never from pairs, but only from the solitary

99 Tu Shên-yen was Tu Fu's grandfather

100 The Court of Perpetual Faith meant the Ladies' Palace, and the Court of the Bright Sun the Emperor's Palace — where apparently some darker lady was in favour

101 We have translated as "eastern song" the definite phrase of the original, "Yueh song," meaning a song of Che-kiang Province

The orchid is known in China as the Flower of the Scholar

NOTES ON THE IOEMS

102 The last line probably means that Chinese civilization had not crossed the boundary

103 Wang Wei is not only one of China's great poets but one of her great painters Su Tung po of the Sung Dynasty said of him In his poems we find his paintings in his paintings his poems

104 This song is still popular as a song of farewell and to this day the expression is often used Since we picked willow branches meaning Since we parted

105 In the original the girls who paid tribute were specified as the Han girls and the quarrelling farmers as Pa people

Wen weng was a Han Dynasty official famous as being the first to civilize what is now Sze-chuan Province

106 From the time of the Han Dynasty palace guards wore red caps before dawn The guard of the inner gate would announce dawn and the others would echo his call till all the gates were opened

The Jade Cloud Furs the Pearl Crown and the Dragon Robe were accoutrements of the Emperor

During the Han Dynasty there stood in the palace courtyard great bronze giants holding up their hollowed palms to catch the dew of heaven

The last line refers to the promulgation of the imperial edict from a five-coloured silken scroll by a procession of officials one of whom was Chia Chih

107. It is told by Chuang-tzū, that Yang-tzū, the scholar, before he became a student of Lao-tzū, was highly respected and honoured by his fellow men. Later, through the many years of his discipleship, he lost his prestige, and even a boor would take precedence over him; but he was glad, because he had got rid of pretensions.

There once was a hermit who was fond of sea-gulls, and they followed him wherever he went. His father, asking why they were not frightened, bade the son bring him some. But next day, when the hermit went out intending to take them to his father, they all flew away.

108 *Oh, to go Back Again!* is a song from the Confucian Book of Poems.

109 When the Yuch Kingdom (now Chê-kiang) was conquered by the Wu Kingdom (now Kiang-su), the Yuch King still held his throne and plotted to throw off the tributary yoke. Aided by his able minister Fan Li, he planned to distract the King of Wu with women. Fan Li searched through the Yuch Kingdom for beautiful girls and came upon Hsi Shih washing clothes beside a lake. Controlling his own love for her, he fiercely persuaded her to his plan. She remained at court for some time, and the Wu King, in his infatuation, forgot affairs of state. Weakened by this means, the Wu Kingdom was eventually overcome by the Yueh Kingdom. Fan Li afterwards refused all reward except Hsi Shih, whom he then took travelling through the Five Lakes, the famous sacred lakes corresponding to the Five Sacred Mountains. There is an allusion to this in Wên T'ing-yun's *Near Li-chou Ferry*.

NOTES ON THE POEMS

Hsi Shih suffered from heart trouble and men said that her drawn brows her look of gentleness in suffering which the girls of her time tried unsuccessfully to imitate increased her beauty

110 In the original text where we have used the phrase the richest men of old Chi lun and Shih Chung are specified celebrated rich men of the Chin Dynasty and toward the end where we have used the phrase hosts of the gayest mansions the original specifies Chao and Li well known rich men of the Han Dynasty who maintained in their homes many dancing girls

111 The Horseman of Yieh was Tsao Chang a son of the founder of the Wei Dynasty in the period of the Three Kingdoms

General Wei Ching and General Li Kuang were contemporary generals of the Han Dynasty The first of them was successful but not able The second was an able man who happened to fail and is named here to indicate the general about whom the poem is written Lu Lun's *Border Songs* concern Li Kuang also Wang Changling's *Over the Border*

The original reference to the gushing water specifies in Su le and concerns Hsien Kung a general of the Han Dynasty who surrounded by the Tartars in Su le City was without water but who prayed and was answered by the gushing of a spring which saved his men

In the next line the original text names Ying-chuan the native place of Kuan Fu who is thereby indicated and who was a general of the Han Dynasty a wine-drinking mischief maker

APPENDICES

In the original the last two lines refer definitely to "the Prefect of Yun-chung" This was Wêi Shang of the Han Dynasty He was a venerable official at Yung-chung near the Tartar border and was removed on account of his age But when the Tartars began to advance, he was restored to his post by the Emperor and gave distinguished service

112 Nan-king, called formerly and in the original of this poem Chin-ling, was the capital of the Six Dynasties (317-589)

113 In Giles's *History of Chinese Literature* the latter two lines of this poem are mistakenly ascribed to Tu Fu

114 Sent by the Emperor Wu Ti of Han (140-87 B C) as envoy to the Huns, Su Wu was held captive by them near the Gobi Desert and lived there for nineteen years as a shepherd When he returned, in 86 B C, the first year of the reign of Chao Ti, he was rewarded with "two paltry millions and the chancellorship of the Tributary States not a foot of soil while some cringing courtier gets the marquisate of ten thousand families" Poems of great beauty and interest were interchanged between Su Wu and the renegade general Li Ling

115 In the original text of the second line the poet, indicating himself, names Ch'ien-lou, a well-known but indigent scholar who finally starved to death, and in the later lines which we translate

There have been better men than I to whom heaven
denied a son,

NOTES ON THE POEMS

There was a poet better than I whose dead wife could
not hear him

the original text specifies Teng Yu a man of good character and
conduct to whom Heaven was deaf and unjust granting him no
sons and P an Yueh a writer famous for his elegies to his wife

*The unknown Chinese editor entitled this volume three
hundred poems the number as in the Confucian collection
being slightly inexact*

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W B

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